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THE PERSIAN GULF

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MUSCAT, FROM THE HARBOUR, IN 1809

From a water-colour sketch by Major R. Temple, H.M. 65th Regiment

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THE PERSIAN GULF

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

BY

LT.-COL. SIR ARNOLD T. WILSON

K.C.I.E., C.S.I., C.M.G., D.S.O.

With a Foreword by

The Right Hon. L. S. AMERY, P.C.

OXFORD

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1928

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TO
MY WIFE

IT IS NOT HOWEVER NECESSARY
that a man should forbear to write, till he
has discovered some truth unknown before;
he may be sufficiently useful, by only diversi-
fying the surface of knowledge and luring the
mind by a new appearance to a second view of
those beauties which it had passed
over inattentively before.

JOHNSON, *THE ADVENTURER*, Vol. 37

PREFACE

THE writer is very conscious that he is not equipped for the task to which he has set his hand by any qualification other than that of almost continuous residence in the Persian Gulf for eighteen years, during which his duties have brought him into close contact and uniformly friendly relations with all sorts and conditions of men drawn from every country and from almost every port on its shores.

He makes no claim to original research, the bulk of the book being admittedly and almost inevitably compiled from the very voluminous works of previous writers, and he takes this opportunity gratefully to acknowledge the assistance he has received in this regard from his collaborator, Mr. H. W. Mardon, formerly of the Egyptian Education Department, who is primarily responsible for the chapters relating to the early historical period and the Middle Ages, which are printed substantially as they came from his pen, and for the Bibliography, study of which will, it is hoped, absolve the writer from the late Lord Curzon's eloquent condemnation of those who 'either not having read what has been written by better men before, or reading it only in order to plagiarize and reproduce it as their own, . . . misunderstand, misspell, and misinterpret everywhere as they go'. It is not the intention of the author to replace or even to supplement existing histories dealing with the region to which this work relates. He has attempted to write, however inadequately, a regional history, in order to enable local residents, whose curiosity is the raw material of local patriotism and of historical scholarship, to learn something of the early records of the country in which they live. To study the broad lines of history without the correction afforded by its application to the scenes in which we live, is apt to dull our senses to the true lessons of history. In the Persian Gulf, as elsewhere, it is in our power, as it is our duty, to learn from and to profit by the mistakes of past generations. If we do so, we may look forward with confidence to the future.

The reader is asked to regard the foot-notes, with which this book is plentifully provided, as invitations to pause on his way to examine more closely some object of interest or suggestion for further study. If, however, they fail to attract the general reader, they may nevertheless serve to direct other workers in this rich field to sources which might otherwise be overlooked.

The imaginative reader will find in many of the works quoted herein themes that could be put to fiction not less successfully than poetry has been put to music. The Gulf awaits an historical novelist who will do it justice: the continued vogue of *Hajji Baba* and the renewed popularity of *Vathek* and *Zohrab* indicate that he would find a ready public, and it is certain that the history, no less than the summer climate of the Gulf, contains ample material for a new series of a thousand and one romantic if sleepless nights.

It is the writer's object to enable those whom duty or inclination brings to the Gulf, or whose work brings them in contact with its problems, to study in the compass of a single work the pageant of its history, in which Great Britain has played such a distinguished part since Drake defeated and the winds of Providence destroyed the Spanish Armada. In every port, on every island in these waters are the forgotten graves of men of our race, whose careless sacrifice of their lives has made existence and trade in this region possible for us, just as the labour of generations at sea and on land has made ' this realm, this England, this dear, dear land ' what it is to-day. In their honour, and for those who believe that the British Empire is still, under Providence, the greatest instrument for good that the world has seen, and who hold, with the writer, that its work in the East is not yet accomplished, this book is written.

A. T. W.

FOREWORD

A CERTAIN aroma of romance hangs round the name of the Persian Gulf, but those who know the region best are probably least disposed to regard it in a romantic light. It is an area of bleak coasts, torrid winds, and pitiless sunshine. The amenities of life are few and far between. Nature is in her fiercest humour and man has done little to improve upon her handiwork. The population is scanty, the standard of living low. Towns are few and insanitary; villages little more than clusters of mud huts.

To a casual visitor it might seem a mere backwater to which civilization has scarcely penetrated.

But appearances are proverbially deceptive. For centuries past this remote backwater has played its part in the world's history. Its shores echoed to the tramp of Alexander's legions. It has seen Empires rise and fall. It has watched the rivalries of the maritime nations of the West.

Lying as it does on the high road to India it has acquired in British eyes an ever-increasing importance during the last hundred years. For more than a century Great Britain has been the predominant power in the Gulf waters. It is due entirely to British effort and British enterprise that this maritime highway has been kept open for the commerce of the world. It is we who have policed its waters, built lighthouses, laid down buoys and cables, suppressed piracy, put an end to the slave trade, and controlled the traffic in arms. We have compelled the restless Arab tribesmen to keep the peace at sea. We have been in Treaty relations with them for many years past. The necessity of maintaining our predominant influence in the Gulf has long been an axiom of British-Indian policy. Lord Lansdowne announced in the House of Lords on the 5th May 1903 that 'we should regard the establishment of a naval base or of a fortified port on the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests, and that we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal'. This policy was reaffirmed by Lord

Lansdowne's successor, Sir Edward Grey, in 1907. It stands unchallenged to this hour.

The outbreak of the Great War threw our interests here, as everywhere else, into grave jeopardy. At the head of the Gulf stood the Turk, and when the Turk joined our enemies we were bound, if our rights were to be preserved, to act at once. Otherwise the results of decades of patient effort and sacrifice would have shrivelled in a night. It was with this object that the famous Expeditionary Force D was dispatched to Basra in the autumn of 1914. It was bound on no purposeless adventure. Action was forced upon us by stern necessity. We were led, it is true, into strange experiences and into new responsibilities which some would have preferred to avoid. But in its inception the step was inevitable. We could not have acted otherwise.

Our record in the Gulf region will bear the closest scrutiny. We have worked, not for ourselves alone, but for all nations. We have claimed no special facilities and no exclusive privileges. We have been content to place our energy and enterprise into free competition with those of others, and to abide by the result. We can survey a century's work with a stout heart and a clear conscience.

So much for the past. What of the future? Is the Persian Gulf likely in the years to come to play the same part as it played in the years that lie behind us? I believe that its importance is destined not to diminish but to increase. The Middle East is being opened up. Everywhere there are new conditions and new opportunities of development and progress. To take one point only. We are often told that the future lies in the air. In our air communications with the East the shores of the Persian Gulf are likely to furnish an essential link. This is a new factor, the full significance of which we can at present only dimly comprehend.

But if our good work is to continue we must depend in the future, as we have depended in the past, upon our own qualities. I should wish, if space were available, to say something of those devoted Englishmen who have laid down their lives in these

inhospitable regions. *Quae caret ora cruore nostro?* It is these men that have built up, bit by bit, a structure that stands to-day. Will the future bring others to tread in their footsteps? On this point I have no doubt whatever. The British Empire can always count upon men to do its work.

Of living authorities on the Gulf region, few can point to a finer record of service than Sir Arnold Wilson. Few men are better acquainted with the Middle East as a whole, and with the Gulf region in particular. Few can be better qualified to paint the picture in its true colours and to present to English readers the full story of what their countrymen have achieved. It is with every confidence that I commend his book to their notice.

L. S. AMERY.

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ERRATA

Plate XVI, *for* Sayyid Ali Bui Sālim
read Sayyid Ali Bin Salim

Page 241, line 9, *for* British Somaliland
read French Somaliland

I

THE PERSIAN GULF

Introductory

NO arm of the sea has been, or is of greater interest, alike to the geologist and archaeologist, the historian and geographer, the merchant, the statesman, and the student of strategy, than the inland water known as the Persian Gulf. ' The Gulf ', as we shall hereafter often call it, following the custom of master mariners for three centuries, has a place in the written history of mankind older than that of any other inland sea ; its story can be traced, though not continuously, from the very earliest historic times ; its central position on one of the main highways between East and West has from the dawn of civilization invested it with peculiar importance : it was the scene of great events, which determined the trend of development of the human race, while the Mediterranean was probably still unfurrowed by the keels of ships. The mass of literature on the subject in half a score of languages, of which a proportion only is included in our bibliography, bears eloquent testimony to the continuous interest of Europe in the subject from the earliest times. Portuguese explorers in the sixteenth, and British, French, and Dutch Trading Companies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, sought to establish trading monopolies in its waters to the exclusion of each other, the first named at the point of the sword, the others by more peaceful means.

Though, as a stage in a great line of communication, the Persian Gulf has at all times had a formidable rival in the Red Sea, at the commencement of the nineteenth century the envoys of Napoleon sought to acquire interests and influence here [1] in the

[1] ' Buonaparte will, as much as possible, avoid the dangers of the Sea, which is not his element, but, trusting to his own exertions and the enthusiasm of his followers, endeavour to accomplish his object, by marching to Aleppo, cross the Euphrates, and following the example of Alexander, by following the River Euphrates and the Tigris, and descending to the Persian Gulph, and thence proceeding along the coast to the Indies.'

Henry Dundas,
Secretary of War, to Lord Grenville,
13. 6. 1798. (Autograph letter.)

pursuit of French dreams of world conquest. From the end of the last century until the outbreak of the World War in 1914 the Gulf was an important factor in world politics, as a consequence, up to 1907, on the one hand of the territorial ambitions of Russia in Persia, and on the other of the *drang nach Osten* of Germany and the centralizing and nationalistic policies of 'Young Turkey'.[1]

Apart from these extraneous and, in an historical sense, transient factors, the position of this inland sea, lapping the shores of the territories of Arabia, Iraq, and Persia, and on the flank of all ocean routes from Aden eastwards, invests it inevitably with strategical importance. The fact that Consular Officials and Political Agents along the littoral are nominated and controlled by the Government of India is a practical recognition of the inescapable reality of 'Indian interests', of which the extension of the sphere of the Indian Navy to these waters is a logical and necessary sequence.

The Persian Gulf and, in a somewhat less degree, the Red Sea are two great prolongations of the Indian Ocean penetrating the very centre of the Old World, running almost parallel to each other, both attaining at their extremities the same latitude (30° N.) and both giving access to Europe from the Indian Ocean. In its strict geographical sense the Persian Gulf, which covers an area of about 97,000 square miles, is almost an 'inland sea', but, more broadly, it cannot be dissociated from the Gulf of Oman to which it is joined by the Strait of Ormuz. The total length from the coast of Oman to the head of the gulf is about 500 miles, while the length of the waterway from the open ocean to the same point is not less than 800 miles: its breadth varies from 180 miles at its widest part to a minimum width of only twenty-nine miles at the strait.

On either side of the Persian Gulf lie the two great plateaux of Iran and of Arabia, the former, however, lying much the nearer to its coast. The Iranian upheaval is buttressed up by a great mountain chain seamed by interlacing spurs and radiating from the great massif or nucleus of Armenia, the Elburz and Caucasus ranges being other radiations. It trends south-eastwards from the crown, first in simple character, but later to split up into long parallel alinements of distinct chains with intervening half-filled valleys running south-eastward or eastwards for nearly one

[1] Until 1892, or even later, Great Britain sought to interest Germany in Persia, Mesopotamia, and the Persian Gulf in order to ensure that her influence would be used to check Russian expansion southwards. In 1892 our Ambassador at Berlin was actually urging Bismarck to interest German shipping and German trade in these regions, but our efforts at this period met with scant encouragement.

thousand miles. The lower parallels of this great range are separated, east of Bushire, by but a little interval from the coast, and the ground changes by quick gradations from arid alluvial tracts to desolate gravelly hills, to the north of which emerge, gaunt and forbidding, a long and seemingly endless series of hog's back limestone ranges: those nearest the coast are from 3,000 to 6,000 feet above sea level, and each successive range to the north increases in height, as do the intervening valleys, until, at a distance of some two hundred miles from the coast, the main Persian plateau, of an average height of some 5,500 feet, is reached, bounded by ranges of mountains which rise to a height of some 13,000 feet. Flat alluvial plains with occasional marshes or salt lakes fill the upland valleys, in which sturdy tribesmen, semi-nomadic by necessity rather than by choice, graze their flocks and coax a precarious subsistence from the parched soil wherever perennial water can be found sufficient for their flocks and for human needs. In South Persia the line of perennial snow is about 14,000 feet, an altitude to which hardly any peaks attain, except perhaps south-west of Kirman and Yezd; below 6,000 feet, snow only lies in normal years for a few weeks.

By comparison, the rise to the broad central highlands of Arabia is by a much easier gradient, the long drainage slope facing north-eastwards. Maximum heights of about 4,000 feet are attained in the basaltic and granite uplands of Jabal Shammar and the limestone ridge of Tuwaiq, lying but little short of 300 miles from the coast, the intervening country, after a broad strip of coastal flats, consisting of sand ridges. On the south the littoral tract passes into a more arid territory divided by pebbly downs from the Red Desert or *Al Rimal*; eastwards along the coast of Oman, at a short distance from the littoral, runs a precipitous range less than 5,000 feet in elevation, of which Jabal Akhdhar, or the 'Green Mountain', is one of the most striking features, terminating in the 'dreaded' Ras Musandam, or Ruus al Jibal (hill-tops), the *Mons Asabo* of Pliny.

The Tigris and Euphrates, though flowing from the near neighbourhood of Ararat, are not ancient streams. Geology, looking farther than history, knows of a time when neither these rivers nor the uplands that nourish them existed, and an ocean flowed over the Holy Places of Iraq, over Persia, and over much of Central Arabia. A Miocene upheaval in Central Asia gave birth to the Persian plateau: the reverse process, a synclinal depression, in tertiary times, produced the Persian Gulf, which must once

have extended from Hit and Samarra, if not as far as Sanjar, to the mountain barrier of Musandam, which then cut it off from the Indian Ocean.

On the Arabian coast the mountain folds, though less pronounced in elevation than those on the Persian side, are parallel, and this vast stratigraphic system in the various mountains presents the same characteristics and is due to the same causes. Formerly, the volcanoes of Central Arabia and the environs of Aden joined forces with those of Persia, resulting in a vast depression near the middle of the space comprised between the two centres.[1] Just as the upheaval in the Caucasus and of Iran gave birth to the Caspian Sea and to the steppes of the north, so that of Arabia and Persia has been the cause of the Mesopotamian depression of the Persian Gulf; whilst in the north, the Don, Volga, and Oxus filled the hollow by their incessant tribute of silt, so the Tigris, Euphrates, and Karun filled the westernmost parts of the inland sea of the south and, little by little, all Mesopotamia rose out of its waters.[2]

But this does not mean that the coast line of the Mesopotamian delta was, as is assumed by De Morgan, Hogarth, and Myres, gradually pushed forward into the Gulf by the annual increment of silt. The probability is that the delta formed by the joint action of the Karun, Diz, and Karkheh rivers from the Zagros range, and that of the Wadi Batin, which drains an area of 150,000 square miles, from the highlands of Arabia, combined to form a barrier of comparatively high land in diluvial times, between Chaldea and the Persian Gulf, thus creating and perpetuating for all time a lacustrine régime.

The Batin brought down heavy gravels and coarse sands, which can be seen round Zubair: the streams from the Zagros brought lighter material, but still heavier by far than that brought down by the less rapid stream of the Tigris, and by the still slower waters of the Euphrates.

The annual volume of silt annually carried past Falluja by the Euphrates is 1·22 million cubic yards: that of the Tigris at Baghdad[3] is 2·2 million cubic yards. The Karun, Diz, and Karkheh, between them, bring down about 1·5 million cubic yards, but of all the silt carried by the Euphrates and Tigris not more

[1] Pilgrim (1). [2] De Morgan (1), vol. ii.

[3] De Morgan (1), vol. ii; Hogarth (3), p. 58; Myres, J. L., *The Dawn of History*. For a fuller discussion of this question see a paper by the present writer, *G.J.*, March 1925.

than ten per cent. reaches Fao: the rest is deposited, and probably has been deposited since diluvial times, in the Chaldean Lakes. The silt of the Karkheh is entirely deposited in the marshes: that of the Karun and Diz alone reaches without substantial diminution the bar of the Shatt al Arab.

The Persian Gulf is remarkably shallow for so large an area of water. The sea-floor rises rapidly from an extreme depth of about 1,800 fathoms in mid-Gulf, off Muscat, to about 80 fathoms in the Strait of Ormuz, just off Ras Musandam. Within the Gulf itself, deep soundings range from 40–50 fathoms and the line of greatest depth lies much nearer to the Persian coast than the Arabian, the consequence being that the whole of the southern shore, right round to and beyond the Shatt al Arab extending to Bushire, is extremely shallow and shelving, making it impossible for modern ships of 5,000 tons or more to approach within five miles of the shore.[1] The 20-fathom line lies 70 miles off the coast at the mouth of the Shatt al Arab, and 100–105 miles off Bahrain. The shallowness is intensified by an intricate maze of shoals and reefs, of great extent, in the southern sweep of the Gulf—the home of the pearl oyster, for which the Gulf was famed even in Nearchus' day and probably far earlier,[2] and the retreat of the pirates who infested the Gulf from the fifteenth century onwards and, indeed, at a far earlier period.

Rising here and there above the general level of the sea-bed are isolated eminences which manifest themselves in the numerous islands which dot the expanse of the Gulf, especially its western part, and mostly at no great distance from the shore. The islands differ in physical character, however, one from another: whilst those of the Persian littoral—Shaikh Shuaib, Qishm, Hormuz, Larak, and Hanjam—are, in places, rocky and scarped, like the coast of which they once formed a part; those near the Arabian littoral are little more than shoal islands and coral islets, though several are, in geological structure, akin to Hormuz.

The salinity of the waters of the Persian Gulf is low for an inland sea. The water is fresher at the head of the Gulf than nearer the strait, and in summer than in winter, owing firstly to the great discharge of the Mesopotamian rivers [3] and secondly to the absence of currents from the outer ocean. The water mass is too

[1] *The Persian Gulf Pilot*, 1924.

[2] A cuneiform tablet found at Ur in 1926 by Mr. C. L. Woolley, dated about 2000 B.C., refers to a parcel of 'fish eyes' from Dilmun (? Bahrain), which may stand for pearls.

[3] Schott (1).

inconsiderable and ingress at the bottle-neck entrance of the Gulf too restricted, for ocean currents to enter freely.

In the Gulf of Oman the trend of currents corresponds to that of the air; there is a flow towards the Strait of Ormuz from May to September, i. e. during the period of the SW. monsoon, and during the rest of the year a slight out-flow towards the open sea. But within the Persian Gulf little or no current oscillation other than tidal can be observed; what movement there is is entirely superficial, the result of high winds, which make as much as two feet difference to the soundings over the Shatt al Arab bar.

The Persian Gulf receives the waters of but one perennial system of rivers—that of the Euphrates, Tigris, Karkheh, and Karun—which, with their tributaries, combine in bringing down the snow waters of the Zagros ranges and of the massif of Armenia. The only other independent streams worthy of mention are the Jerrahi and Hindiyan or Tab (known to classical authors as the *Arosis*), which bring their own quota of silt to combine with that of the greater streams in the creation of vast mud flats. With these exceptions the coast is ill-supplied with fresh water, its scanty streams being, without exception, brackish.

Climatic conditions in the Gulf are profoundly affected by the configuration of the surrounding region. The broad mountain chains which extend to the north and north-west interfere with the free inflow of tempering winds from the north; while the absence of mountains on a grand scale to the south and west gives free ingress to scorching winds in summer. During the late spring and summer the prevailing wind is the *shamal*, from the NW., hot but dry and healthy. In the late summer and autumn, and occasionally in winter, the SE. wind, known as the *qaus* or *sharqi*, blows for a few days at a time, accompanied by a falling barometer and an increase in the wet-bulb temperature in summer, and by rain in winter. This wind, disliked by local inhabitants and Europeans alike, has enjoyed a bad reputation from all time. A charm against 'the evil of the South Wind' was found by Mr. Woolley during his excavations at Ur in 1925.

Meteorological observations[1] systematically taken at various places for periods varying from eight to thirty-three years, give the following mean annual rainfalls: Basra 6·23 inches; Bushire 11·07; Jask 4·17; Muscat 3·94; Bahrain 2·47; from which it will be noted that the Persian coast receives, in general, more rain than the Arabian.

[1] Admiralty Handbook, I.D. 1117.

a. View of 2000-ft. gorge of the Diz River at Kuh-i-Langieh. Note belt of full-grown date palms flanking left bank of river and snow-capped Kuh-i-Salun (7,500 ft.) in the background

b. A 30-ft. cleft in the Kuh-i-Langieh, through which breaks the Ab-i-Diz after traversing the gorge shown in *a*

c. Flats of the Ab-i-Diz below Dizful. Evening

d. The reputed tomb of the Prophet Daniel at 'Shushan the Palace' near the Diz, south of Dizful

Mean temperature varies as follows:

Basra and Mohammerah	51·8°	Fahr.	in Jan. to	90·7°	in Aug.
Bushire . . .	57·5°	„	„	89·4°	„ „
Jask . . .	66·7°	„	„	89°	„ „
Muscat . . .	69·3°	„	„	89·7°	„ June
Bahrain . . .	61·2°	„	„	91·2°	„ Aug.

Absolute shade temperatures are:

	Absolute Min.	*Absolute Max.*
Basra and Mohammerah .	23·7°	120°
Bushire	32·0°	115°
Jask	41·8°	111·8°
Muscat	57·5°	114·3°
Bahrain	40·8°	108·2°

Relative humidity is high throughout the Gulf proper, the maximum being experienced at Bahrain.

The climate of the Persian Gulf, as a whole, has an unenviable but undeserved reputation. From November to April inclusive, it does not suffer from comparison with that of Egypt: cold, dry, and bracing, Europeans, who have found the short winter of the Indian plains an all too brief respite from the enervating damp heat of the summer, here maintain their health and energy to the envy of their fellows in India. Wherever local or official enterprise has provided electric light and ice and decent living accommodation, the health and efficiency of all concerned have immensely benefited, and the health of the troops stationed during the war, often in large numbers, at Bandar Abbas and Bushire, compared most favourably with that of troops in any part of India.

The Anglo-Persian Oil Company—in whose service some 900 Europeans work, largely in the open, at Abadan, on the oilfields east of Shushtar, and at half a dozen spots between Khanikin and Bushire—have amply demonstrated the efficacy and economy of providing all their employees with proper quarters and the necessary amenities of life in a hot climate, with the result that the health of the staff is actually better in summer than in winter, and at all times incomparably better than that of similar categories of workers in any part of India. The Admiralty have made a similar discovery and, though the gunboats which patrol the Gulf are not specially constructed for tropical climates, the provision of ice, lights, and fans, and of suitable fresh food—notably fruit—has enabled them to keep their European crews as healthy in the Persian Gulf as in the Mediterranean.

The Arabian coastal region is peopled almost exclusively by Arabs, but alien elements occur in many of the towns. The Arabs of Oman belong, according to tradition, to two racial groups: Yemeni, said to have been the first Arab settlers in this district, and Nizari or Nasiri, less purely Arab and, for the most part, later immigrants. A large proportion of the population of Bahrain and the oases of Hasa and Qatif belong to a race or clan known as *Baharina* whose origin is doubtful, but they are regarded either as an aboriginal tribe conquered and absorbed by the Arabs, or as a class formed by the conversion of certain Arab tribes to Shiism, about 300 years ago. The nomads are exclusively Arab or quasi-Arab. Besides these main elements there are, at various places, communities of Baluchis, Persians, Indians, and Negroes, the latter being the outcome of several centuries of slave trade. At the head of the Persian Gulf the indigenous population is principally Arab, while, along the Persian littoral from the Shatt al Arab as far as the Strait of Ormuz, it is composed of a medley of races and racial blends, of which the most important elements are Persians and Persian Arabs, the latter of whom may be described as Arabs under Persian rule who have become denationalized by settlement, subjection, or inter-marriage. Besides these main elements there is, in the north, a strong Lur element, while, in the neighbourhood of Behbehan, a Turkman (Qashqai) strain appears. Along the Makran coast are a number of tribes claiming descent from Arabs who either originally settled in Makran or moved there later from Sind or Kach. On the Persian coast the hill tribes of Qashqai or Arab origin make periodic migrations with their flocks from the cold mountain regions (*sardsir*) to the warm coastal districts (*garmsir*) without however actually debouching into the plains.

It is not improbable that the Gulf witnessed the first attempts at navigation of the most ancient peoples of whom there is historical record—Sumerians, Elamites, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Chaldeans—but exact knowledge of the history and geography of the Persian Gulf, in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian Era, is exceedingly meagre and fragmentary. What is known has been gleaned from the works of the Greek and Roman geographers and historians—Ptolemy, Strabo, Pliny, and others —who give not inconsiderable though often conflicting and contradictory information about the places and people of the Arabian shore, but very little regarding the opposite littoral. They say enough, however, to show that the peoples around the Persian

Gulf shores were, even as early as those days, not unused to its waters as a means of communication for commercial as well as military purposes. In the seventh century B.C. Sennacherib constructed a fleet which proceeded against the Chaldeans (who had taken refuge in the towns of the sea-coast of Elam) from Bab Salimeti, near the Euphrates mouth, to the mouth of the Karun River (distant 100 miles and, then, having a separate outflow into the Gulf down the Khor Musa past Qubban), and successfully looted and broke up their settlements. Coming down to the fourth century A.D., we read of raids on the Persian coast, made by Arabs of Bahrain and the adjacent districts, being common, till Shapur made a naval reprisal in the Persian Gulf which was completely successful.

But during all these centuries, though absolute proof of extensive communication with the outer world beyond the narrow limits of the waters of the Gulf is wanting, there is high probability of trade with India and farther east. Then came an epoch-making event:

'The voyage of Nearchus' (326–325 B.C.), says Vincent, 'from the Indus to the Euphrates is the first event of general importance to mankind, in the history of navigation; and if we discover the comprehensive genius of Alexander in the conception of the design, the abilities of Nearchus in the execution of it are equally conspicuous. Historical facts demand our attention in proportion to the interest we feel, or the consequences we derive from them; and the consequences of this voyage were such, that as, in the first instance, it opened a communication between Europe and the most distant countries of Asia, so, at a later period, was it the source and origin of the Portuguese discoveries, the foundation of the greatest commercial system ever introduced into the world; and consequently the primary cause, however remote, of the British establishments in India.'[1]

Following this great achievement, in the sixth century Noshirwan of Persia, fired by the desire for conquest in Arabia, fitted out a great expedition and sailed down the Gulf from Ubulla (Apologos), an important mart of commerce with India, situated near the mouth of the Euphrates, doubled Ras al Hadd (Oman), and, coasting along the southern shores of Arabia, reached Aden.

Gradually the veil is lifted, and we learn more fully of the maritime happenings in the Gulf. It is now to the long succession of Arab and Persian geographers and historians, who wrote between the ninth and early part of the seventeenth centuries, that we turn for enlightenment on the conditions and activities of the peoples

[1] Vincent (3), pp. 1 f.

on its shores. At first their works were largely translations of the earlier classic geographers, but they become more original as their explorers in due course traversed nearly every country of central and southern Asia, northern Africa, and Mediterranean Europe; and from such voyages as those made by Sulaiman the Merchant about A.D. 850 gradually arose the series of narratives which we know by the name of Sindbad the Sailor—'a real account with a little more of mystery and exaggeration than usual of the experiences of the early Arab mariners in the Southern Ocean'.[1]

The zenith of Arab and Moslem intercourse with China was reached in the latter years of the ninth century. In the twelfth century we find Siraf 'with its lofty palaces and other stately buildings' coming into prominence, and regarded in the thirteenth century as the emporium of Fars (Persia), after which the commercial prosperity passed to Qais, the island port farther to the east; and this place was supplanted in turn, probably about the fourteenth century, by Hormuz as the principal trade emporium of the Persian Gulf.

Trade with the West was coming into being all this time. It must not be thought, however, that commerce between East and West, of which the Arabs enjoyed the monopoly as middlemen, flowed entirely through the Persian Gulf and Euphrates waterway. It was shared almost equally by the Red Sea route, and it was by one or other of these lines of communication that most of the products of the Indian Ocean and south-east Asia, as well as Sudanese Africa, reached the Levant. The routes were sometimes closed by political difficulties, and one pretty constant danger to both was the existence of pirates at Socotra and elsewhere.

The European States trading most extensively with the East, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, were Venice and Genoa. When these lost their supremacy in trade, it was evident that, in order to escape the hostility of the Turks and Mamelukes of Egypt, the discovery of some untrammelled line of access to India would confer great wealth and prestige on a nation able to profit by it: the country which most earnestly devoted itself to this quest was Portugal. Certain it is, that by the epoch-making discovery of the Cape route by Vasco da Gama in 1498, the history of the Persian Gulf enters upon a new phase. Among Europeans, the first comers to its waters were the Portuguese themselves, and the acquisition by that nation of a firm footing in the Gulf, in the opening years of the sixteenth century, was one of the fruits of

[1] Beazley.

da Gama's discovery. The 'Great Alboquerque' began by attacking Hormuz, and completed his task by devastating and occupying a number of towns on the Oman coast, thus gaining command of the inland sea. The Portuguese held a not always undisputed sway until their final expulsion from Hormuz in 1622.

In the interim the East India Company had come into being and, having taken steps to open up trade with Persia, succeeded, in the face of Portuguese opposition, in establishing a factory near Jask. Hormuz was wrested from the Portuguese by the Persians, with the aid of the East India Company who, by grand promises, were enticed into an agreement to assist in its capture. By this event the foundation of British commercial supremacy was laid, and it paved the way to the establishment of political preponderance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Gombrun (Bandar Abbas) became the first centre of British enterprise in the Gulf. During a long period of the seventeenth century the Company had to carry on a keen struggle with the Dutch, who, first appearing in the early years of that century, had succeeded in becoming for a time the predominant power. British supremacy was not fully established for many years, but the Dutch finally gave up the commercial contest in 1766, when their only remaining factory on Kharag Island was destroyed by the Persians.

The three outstanding indigenous spheres of dominion of the Persian Gulf, all through these events, were the Persians in the north-east, the Turks in the north, and the Arabs in the south. Each had its period of supremacy, but, finally, the controlling element seemed to be the Omani Arabs of Muscat whose power extended both to the African coasts and to India. At the end of the seventeenth century we hear for the first time of their power on the sea, and of the Jawasim of the 'Pirate Coast'. Arab rule in the Gulf was for long periods synonymous with piracy, and very early in the evolution of the English power in Asia the obligation to control and suppress that evil forced itself upon the agents of the East India Company. By their tardy and unwilling intervention three results of capital importance to humanity were eventually achieved—the suppression of piracy; the cessation of war between the chiefs of the various petty states; and the extinction of the slave trade.

The suppression of piracy and slavery is a long chapter of endurance and brave deeds: whatever of civilization and of public order exists to-day in these waters has its origin in the

patient labours and generally unrewarded gallantry of successive generations of soldiers, seamen, and supercargoes, British and Indian, under the orders at first of the East India Company, and later of the British Government and of the Government of India. It was a struggle waged not always with the sympathy and assistance of France but even with her open hostility, for British men-of-war have had to see slavers plying with impunity under the protection of the tricolour. To quote Lovat Fraser:

'For more than a century we have made of the Gulf, by the force and prestige of our arms, a haven of peace. There is no part of our work in the world that can be contemplated with greater satisfaction. We routed out the nests of pirates, captured their strongholds and destroyed their fleets, suppressed slavery, and stopped the importation of slaves from Africa. We kept the peace between the pirate chiefs and their successors, and bound them by a truce to refrain from hostilities at sea, so that to this day they are known as the Trucial Chiefs of Oman. Out of that permanent truce grew treaties, by which they acknowledge the British Government as their overlords and protectors. We established a protectorate over Bahrain and special and preferential relations with Koweit. We saved the native dhows from being plundered during the date season, and we maintained order at the annual pearl fishery. We surveyed the greater part of the Gulf, and at the request of Persia we created a sanitary organization which has kept the plague at bay. Our Residents in the Gulf have been the arbiters in all the quarrels of the Chiefs on the Arabian Coast, and have time and again averted bloodshed. If we were to withdraw, slavery and piracy and kidnapping and anarchical strife would reappear to-morrow.' [1]

On the other hand, the impartial historian will record that, during this period, whilst in our own interests maintaining public order and health with exemplary solicitude, and paying, as a great maritime nation should, some attention to marine surveys and to the lighting and buoying of the Persian Gulf and to cable and wireless communication, we made nowhere, except at Abadan and on the oil fields, any attempt to establish schools or colleges, or to assist the inhabitants to develop local industries, or to fit them to take their place in a rapidly changing world: medical aid was restricted to the maintenance of a few dispensaries of little practical value: the vast hinterland of Oman and of the Arabian coast remained virtually unexplored, and instead of making use of our position, and of the unequalled resources of the Topographical and Geological Surveys of India, to make a thorough survey of the hinterland of both coasts, we left this task, for the most part, to chance travellers.

[1] Fraser, Lovat (3), p. 82.

The marine and terrestrial fauna, the flora, and the geology of this region have never been systematically studied, as they should have been, by the highly competent experts available in India, and, though we have surveyed, it is true, a large part of the Gulf, it has not been systematically undertaken and it is not an unknown occurrence for a ship to strike an uncharted rock. We poured out money like water in fruitless endeavours to suppress the Arms Traffic, but grudged the comparatively trifling sums necessary for such purposes. In these directions a fresh orientation of the benevolent policy pursued by Great Britain for over a century is necessary, if we are to retain in the twentieth century the honourable position vouchsafed to us by our efforts in other spheres of activity in earlier years.

The trade monopoly of the East India Company, in its corporate capacity, came to an end about 1813, and gradually, under pressure of events in Europe, a political as well as a commercial policy was inaugurated and the direction of Persian Gulf affairs was assumed by the Government of Bombay, to pass, none too soon, from their feeble and incompetent hands into those of the Government of India. Towards the close of the nineteenth century, rival interests again sought a footing in the Persian Gulf. The French, whose status in Muscat was nominally identical with that of Great Britain, desired to secure a coaling station there in 1895; Russia, in the endeavour to enlarge her sphere of influence, sent various missions thither, ostensibly to establish a 'warm water port' to serve as a constant outlet for her trade, and heavily subsidized a line of steamers from the Black Sea; Turkey assumed control of native states on the western littoral, claiming suzerainty over Hasa and Bahrain and even Oman, and endeavoured to bring within her orbit the long autonomous principality of Kuwait; while Germany, in pursuance of her Oriental policy and the realization of her dream of a through route from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf, spared no pains to obtain a solid footing under the guise of commercial expansion, and urged the Young Turks and Young Persians alike to further efforts in the supposed interests of their respective countries.

The changes wrought in the Persian Gulf by the World War were not less profound or less perplexing than in Europe. The Armistice found Great Britain in a *de facto* position which appeared stronger than ever before. Russia was in temporary eclipse; Turkey had been cut off, apparently for ever, from Gulf waters; Germany had suffered a reverse from which she would scarcely

recover in a generation ; the French, whose attitude at Muscat up to 1914 had seldom been helpful and was sometimes one of avowed obstruction verging on hostility, were our comrades in arms in Europe ; Ibn Saud, our subsidized ally and protagonist in Central Arabia, had extinguished all his rivals; the war had enriched in many ways the maritime Arab principalities, who one and all had the satisfaction of feeling that they were on the winning side ; we were in temporary military occupation of nearly every port on the Persian side of the Gulf, and the South Persia Rifles, under British guidance, had defeated our enemies, which were equally those of the Persian Government, in Kirman and Shiraz and in many other inland towns.

A reaction was inevitable, and was not unforeseen by those on the spot. Our subsidies to Ibn Saud were bound to come to an end sooner or later[1]—and, with them, our only title to control or influence the ruler of Nejd and Hasa. The inflated value of the rupee, which rose during the war from its normal parity of 1*s.* 4*d.* to double this figure, was bound to fall, and to involve even substantial merchants in bankruptcy, and our Consuls and Agents in endless claims on the part of British merchants unable to obtain payment for goods delivered. The military occupation was bound to terminate, and with it the fertilizing stream of British gold : as the seven fat kine were the precursors of seven lean, so the prosperous years of the war had their profitless successors. The produce of the Persian Gulf—wool, wheat, barley, hides—became temporarily unsaleable : the market for pearls alone was unaffected or even improved, thanks to the greatly increased demand for pearls from the United States and from South America, to many of whose citizens, fabulously enriched by the prices they were able to extort from Europe for essential commodities, this form of wealth seems to have made an irresistible appeal, to the great advantage of Bahrain and, doubtless, to the despair of the various Customs Administrations.

The aspirations for independence of King Husain, of the Egyptians, Syrians, and Mesopotamians, had no counterpart in the Arabian littoral: there, except at Muscat, we had nowhere landed troops, or had resort to measures of compulsion in the prosecution of the war : resentment at the measures taken by us between 1909 and 1912 for the suppression of the Arms Traffic still lingered in places, but no leader arose to fan the embers into flame. In Oman, it was realized on all sides that the measures taken by us to protect

[1] They were finally discontinued in 1923.

Muscat from a threatened invasion, in 1916, by the tribal forces of the self-constituted and all but universally recognized Imam, were inevitable and necessary and aroused no resentment. On this side of the Gulf, therefore, the reaction was mild.

On the Persian side, where the *status quo ante bellum* had been more violently disturbed, first by hostile German agencies and later by the vigorous measures taken by us to combat them, the reaction was proportionately severe. The central Government in Tehran, jealous of the independence of Persia which they imagined to be menaced by our policy, set themselves to purge the country of foreign influences, and as the English were, for practical purposes, the only foreign element in South Persia, it was against British influence, in every form, that the energies of local officials were directed. Officials known to be on friendly terms with the British were removed: notables with pro-British tendencies were persecuted: those who had fought against us, even though outlawed at the time by their own Government, were decorated and rewarded: Persians in British employ were threatened. On the common people the campaign had little effect, and British travellers amongst the villagers and tribes received, and still receive from them, at all times and almost in all places, a cordial and often affectionate welcome.

Amongst the merchant classes in Persia, for reasons given above, and amongst the younger generation who had received some education, the seed fell on more favourable soil. The *intelligentsia* had seldom secured employment with the British forces; more often had they lost it, when sinecure offices were abolished on British advice.

Some of them, too, were anxious to see the last of us on national grounds: patriotism is a plant which bears strangely different flowers in different soils and in different ages; and its fruit is sometimes bitter. Persians love their country and their fellow men not less genuinely and perhaps more deeply than many western races, but in times of emergency they are apt to summon racial prejudice and religious intolerance to their aid with such effect, that a movement, which may be genuinely patriotic in its origin, appears on the surface to be an artificial agitation created by a few self-seeking men and vulgar intriguers working on the emotions of an ignorant mob. So it was, only too often in South Persia, to the distress of many well-meaning Englishmen who, conscious that they were whole-heartedly seeking to forward the best interests of Persia, as they understood them, were unable to fathom

the deep-rooted antipathy manifested towards them by the leaders of public opinion.

More than once, in past decades, have British counsels been darkened by our inability to put any generous interpretation on the mixed motives of our opponents. Too often have we, and with us many Persians, judging men by their worst hours and most equivocal actions, seen in the desire of a people for a more active share in the shaping of their national destinies no more than the ambition of the idle scions of well-to-do families for the spoils of office. Until recently we have been unable to make an 'act of faith' in the bona fides of the progressive party in Persia. We have ignored progressive movements because we knew, better perhaps than most Persians, the ignoble ambitions of some of the leaders, movements which might well have been forgotten in the greatness of the ultimate potential issues: and our tendency to take a narrow view has been accentuated by the fact that the leaders of political movements have generally resided at Tehran, or on the Persian plateau, so that British Consular Officers in the Persian Gulf have seldom been able to make personal contact with them, and have perforce judged movements primarily on their local manifestations and by their often disreputable local exponents.

This phase, too, has passed and, thanks to the patience of British diplomacy and the good sense of Persians in authority, both military and civil, all over Persia, the good-will of Great Britain is now more widely recognized than at any time since 1907, and the official and mercantile classes alike are beginning to realize that the publicly declared object of British policy 'to maintain the integrity and independence of Persia' is no mere diplomatic fiction but an essential part of British world policy and strategy: but much remains to be done to enlighten the public, both in Persia and elsewhere, as to the history and aims of British policy in Persia. Notwithstanding the classic researches of Professor E. G. Browne and the monumental works of the late Lord Curzon, and, later, of Sir Percy Sykes, there still remains a great field, the fringes only of which are touched by this book, for those who would study the records of British policy in Persia in an historical spirit. Of material for such researches there is no lack; it is in our power, and it is our duty, to learn from and to profit by the mistakes of past generations. If we are to do so we may look forward with confidence to the future, bearing in mind that if we lower our standard in history we cannot uphold it in our national life and international relations. *Magna est veritas, praevalet.*

Lastly, while ample facilities exist in England for the study of Persian literature and thought, it is less easy for a student to gain from lectures, or from any books however well written, an insight into the many subtleties of Persian character and an appreciation of the Persian outlook on life. It is the business of those whom we send to Persia to learn to understand Persian character: the amusement, contempt, or even repulsion, which human observers, wedded to their own ways of life, are apt to feel for a mode of life which differs vitally from their own, cannot but give way, on deeper acquaintance, to a measure of sympathetic understanding. There is a real need for more books which will encourage this tendency, without drifting into needless apologetics more likely to offend than instruct. The study of Persian travel-literature is an important aid in this direction, and if this book helps to foster it in any measure, the writer, deeply conscious of his lack of experience and of the inadequacy of his pen to do justice to his theme, will be well content.

II

PRIMITIVE MAN IN THE PERSIAN GULF AND OMAN

> Less did the Thracian hills Orpheus admire,
> For now he sang how through the vasty void
> Were gathered once the seeds of all those things
> In earth and air and sea and liquid fire
> That grew together—till the young orbed world
> Itself was shaped—then how the solid earth
> Separate became, and all the waters wide
> Were prison'd by degrees in the sea's cup.
>
> VIRGIL, *Eclogue VI*, Cardew's trans.

THE land masses of North Africa, of Arabia, and of Persia, as we now know them, commenced to take their present shape in Miocene times, but in this period of the earth's history the collapsed area of the Red Sea was connected with the Mediterranean along its present alinement.

At the beginning of the Pliocene period, which for our purposes we may assume to have ended about half a million years ago, the Red Sea trough was cut off from the Mediterranean and invaded by the waters of the Indian Ocean and, in the Middle Pliocene, a bay of the marine area now represented by the Mediterranean still extended as far as the desert of Palmyra. In the early part of the Miocene period the great Mediterranean Sea was continuous throughout the present Kurdistan-South Persian mountain belt. A marked withdrawal of the sea then followed and great deposits of salt and gypsum were formed in isolated lagoons. In Middle Miocene the sea again advanced and occupied a great part of its former extent, but towards the end of the period the connexion between Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean was finally interrupted. In early Pliocene times the Persian Gulf was confined to a narrow strip along the present coastal plain of Persia, but only extending as far as Laristan. Farther to the north-west, along the present foot-hill belt, this depressed zone was marked by great fresh-water and brackish lakes in which the Bakhtiari series of sands and conglomerates were deposited, in one place to a thickness of 15,000 feet—a testimony to the vertical depth of these depressions.

The mighty folding movements which formed the great Zagros mountain ranges took place principally during the Pliocene

period, reaching their maximum intensity towards the end. The pressure came from the north-east and, as a result, the depressed zone of the Bakhtiari lakes was displaced to the south-west, forming the present Persian Gulf and the great sunken land of Mesopotamia. The Arabian foreland, on the other hand, was a stable rigid block almost completely undisturbed by the advancing waves of the Persian folding. Oman forms an exception: it is a foreign element in the structure of Arabia. It was strongly folded in middle Cretaceous time, although its great elevation took place later.

The enormous pressure caused by these mountain-building processes produced curious secondary phenonema in the Persian Gulf region. In the Cambrian period (almost the earliest geological period from which life is known) a thick deposit of salt had been formed which had remained throughout the succeeding ages entombed in the rocks. Salt under pressure is quite plastic and can flow just as ice can flow in a glacier. The pressure of the mountain-building movements squeezed out this salt from its resting-place in the bowels of the earth, and it reached the surface in many places as cylindrical plugs four to six miles in diameter. The islands of Hormuz, Hanjam, Larak, Abu Musa, and many others are such salt plugs, while on the mainland they form great salt mountains up to 4,000 feet high, such as the Kuh-i-Namak of Dashtistan and of Laristan. The volcanic rocks, the iron and copper ores and other rocks, normally foreign to this part of Persia, are samples of lower strata which have been brought up by the salt in its uprising.

While these events were taking place in South-west Persia there was great volcanic activity in Central Persia and in Arabia. Great eruptions of basalt probably continued throughout Pleistocene and even into historical times, from Damascus to Mecca, a zone marked to-day at frequent intervals by great sheets of lava, known to the Arabs as *harra*.[1]

If early man existed in the Persian Gulf area (and it is improbable that the warm and hospitable shores of the Arabian continent were untenanted when the highlands of Arabia were occupied) his

[1] The story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah may well be a tradition of an early eruption in the Dead Sea region, accompanied by an emission of naphtha and gas, causing a local conflagration destructive of human life in the locality. Jebel Usdum, the reputed site of Sodom, is a salt dome of similar geological character to the salt islands of the Persian Gulf. The uprise of the salt continued into late Diluvial times and probably even later.

remains must, for the most part, have been overlaid by subsequent marine and fluviatile deposits or buried deep in silt, for no traces of early man in this region before post-Neolithic times have yet been found. But they may yet be discovered, for though the 'eoliths' collected in Belgium from Miocene deposits have not yet been generally accepted as such, those from gravels lining the sides of the present Nile valley are rather better attested,[1] and 'Chellean' implements, dating from the second or third Glacial Ages (say, 400,000 B. C. to 100,000 B. C.), have been found on the surface in Iran and Arabia.[2] There is, however, no proof that Neolithic man existed in Chaldea or Susiana: the instruments of polished stone found at Susa and Bushire cannot reasonably be ascribed to an earlier period than post-Neolithic.[3]

But on the shores of the Indian Ocean and of its prolongations there may never have been a Stone Age: some writers suppose that a Wood and Shell Age preceded the earliest Stone Age: here, if anywhere, early man would have used sharp shells and hardened wood for his needs, and it seems probable that such implements were used to the virtual exclusion of stone or iron far into historic times, for, when Nearchus sailed up the Persian Gulf in 325 B. C., the tribes he encountered along the Baluchistan coast had no iron, nor clothing other than skins.

Arrian, writing of the tribes between Karachi and the modern Ormara, says:[4] 'They had Spears of six Cubits long, but their Points were not of iron, but Wood sharpen'd, and harden'd in the fire . . . they had no Iron among them; and the Skins of wild Beasts, or those of the larger sort of Fish, serv'd them for Clothing. . . . Those who were taken, were found to be hairy all over their Bodies, as well as their Heads, and to have Nails sharp and long, like the Paws of wild beasts.'

This is, in all probability, a very fair picture of the manner of life of early man in this region from the earliest times, persisting in some cases (e. g. the Shihuh of Cape Musandam) until the present day.[5] Nor can we doubt that the primitive fishing craft still in use are survivals of the highest antiquity. A sort of cata-

[1] *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. i, p. 11.
[2] Ibid., p. 44.
[3] Pézard, M.
[4] Rooke, vol. ii, p. 249.

[5] Arrian's references to the Ikhthyophagi might also have been written in the twentieth century: 'Some of them are profess'd Fishermen, tho' few have Boats for that purpose, or understand much how to catch Fish artfully: for they get the greatest quantity of theirs when the Tide leaves the Shore. Some of them indeed, make Nets, of two Stadia in length, and make use of the inner Rind of Palm Trees, which they twist together, as we do Hemp: But when the Tide falls away, and the

maran is still used at Muscat by the islanders of Socotra who call there during the fishing season: it is called *ramas*, and is made of three logs about six feet long, roped together with coir, the central log being the longest.

Not less remarkable is the *shasha* in use on the Batina coast. It is made solely of date sticks, two bunches of which are tied together at the small end to form the stem, the thick ends being joined to form the skeleton of the boat, which is filled up with palm bark and coco-nut fibre: they are about twelve feet long and can only hold one or two men, who sit in it half immersed in the water. Though apparently very fragile, these boats are so elastic that they stand the heaviest surf and are used for fishing and for communicating with native craft anchored off shore. The *hoori*, a canoe or dug-out made of a single tree, is also extensively used. All alike are, by reason of their size and shape, as remarked by Nearchus, 'row'd not with Oars, over the Side, according to the Grecian Manner, but with Paddles, which they thrust into the Water, as Diggers do their Spades into the Earth'.[1]

To the habits, born of economic necessity, acquired in these waters by coastal tribes in the earliest ages of mankind of eating dried and sometimes putrescent fish, and by their European cave-men contemporaries of eating meat in a similar condition, we may reasonably ascribe the modern tolerance of Arabs and riparian Persians and Indians to stale fish, and of Europeans to 'high' venison and game, the products now, as in former days, of the chase.

Oman, and indeed the whole Persian Gulf, is an almost virgin field of exploration for the study of early man: no more remunerative task awaits the scientist than the elucidation of some of the problems here touched on. For it was along the shores of the Persian Gulf that three races of primitive man first met: the

Sea leaves their Shores, they find vast plenty of Fish in the small Gullets, or hollow places, where the Shore is not quite flat . . . the small ones . . . they immediately eat raw, the larger and tougher sort they lay in the Sun to roast, and afterwards rub them to Powder and make Bread thereof, and some mix this Powder and the Flower of Wheat together. . . . But those who inhabit the most desolate Parts, which produce neither Trees nor Fruits, live wholly upon Fish. Few sow any Corn, and even those who do, eat the Bread instead of Meat, and Fish instead of Bread. They build their Houses in this manner: the richer Sort among them, gather up the Bones of Whales, or such other large Fish, as they find cast upon the Shore, and use the smaller Bones for Rafters, and those of a larger size for Door-posts; but the people of inferior Rank, build with the Ribs, and Backbones of other Fish.' Rooke, vol. ii, p. 257.

[1] Rooke, vol. ii, p. 255.

Dravidian, the Eur-African or 'Hamitic', and the Mongoloid stocks. There seems good reason to think that the tribes between Karachi and the modern Ormara, and the Oritae farther west, mentioned by Arrian, were Dravidians, belonging ethnologically to India.[1] The Hamitic group is still represented along the coasts of Oman, and the Shihuh tribe, a small negrito race, prior in origin to the Semitic stock of Arabia, survives in the caves of Cape Musandam.

These groups have a common 'African' ancestry, but, by the time the Dravidian branch had colonized Makran, and the Hamitic branch had spread along the coast of Oman, they had already developed their own racial characteristics, and had virtually become separate races: the Dravidians in Makran had already lost the peculiar characteristics of the standard negro type, e. g. lack of body hair (for Arrian particularly mentions that they had hair all over their bodies); the Hamitic branch in Oman retained some of these characteristics, e. g. the woolly scalp and everted lips. The Mongoloid type was a far later arrival: originating in High Asia, they seem to have remained utterly secluded until post-Glacial times; they come upon the scene as an organized, intellectual race and, it may be, contemporaneous with the beginning of civilization—as we know it—in Mesopotamia, though it is believed by many scholars that a primitive Semitic civilization existed previous to their arrival.

Pastoral races have always tended to absorb sedentary types, and though the Dravidian strain is still traceable along the Makran coast, it has been almost overwhelmed by the more vigorous Baluch invaders. The 'Hamitic' strain was similarly overwhelmed or absorbed by later pastoral Semitic arrivals, the sons of Joktan, whose 'dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar[2] a mount of the east'. The Semites were typically grassland folk, with domestic animals of their own—goat, camel, and ass—all native to Arabia; the sheep and, eventually, the horse were acquired later, in both cases from the north. They have a remarkable type of linguistic structure, remotely shared only by the Hamitic group, and a temperament and outlook more coherent and persistent than any other of the greater races.

Before we leave this fascinating field of speculation for the still

[1] See Tomaschek, *Topographische Erläuterung*, p. 19, quoted by the *Cambridge Hist. of India*, i, p. 380.

[2] Genesis x. 30. Identified respectively by Miles with the Qahtan tribe and the modern Dhufar.

a. The morning's catch (Muscat)

b. Muscat. Arab youth in 'hoori' or dug-out canoe

obscure, but somewhat better attested, regions of early history, it is necessary to refer briefly to the probable trend of climatic changes, which, as already remarked, have been the chief and controlling factor in determining the development and movement of the human race.

Recent investigations lay greater stress on geographical factors, such as the distribution of land and water, the elevation or depression of the region, and other conditions favourable to intense snow-fall at certain places and seasons, than to those astronomical explanations—mutation of the earth's axis or precession of the seasons—which were formerly popular. It is at all events certain that the severest glaciations occurred in periods of submergence, and that the repeated relaxations of glacial austerity coincide with greater exposures of land-surfaces, and with a continental climate, drier rather than warmer, since dry air, however cold, precipitates little snow.[1]

The four glacial periods of Europe are represented in a fourfold pluvial sequence in the Nile valley, and glacial maxima in the New World seem to repeat the relative intensity of successive maxima of the European Ice Age. The question has as yet scarcely been studied in the Persian Gulf region, but it seems quite probable that similar pluvial sequences can be traced. Throughout the foothills area to the north-east, and along the Euphrates border to the west, there are invariably traces of river terraces, usually three in number, the highest of which has a relative height of about 90 feet. In places around the shores of the Persian Gulf and all round the South Arabian coast there are well-defined raised beaches at heights of from 100 to 200 feet above sea level. And the last pluvial epoch, which was drawing to its close at the beginning of historical time, may have been responsible for the great alluvial plains of south-western Persia and of Mesopotamia. Until the diluvial debris became continuous along the western slopes of the Zagros the Persian Gulf extended, though probably not continuously,[2] at least to the point where the Tigris emerges from the foothills of Kurdistan.

[1] *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. i, p. 18.

[2] The great Batin channel, rising in the Central Arabian highlands, draining an area of some 150,000 square miles and debouching near Zubair on the west, and the vast masses of sediments brought down by the Karkheh and Karun, draining between them some 200,000 square miles in the Zagros range, probably created, before man arrived in this region, a vast bar. Behind this barrier were formed the Chaldean Lakes, in which was deposited the silt brought down by the Tigris and Euphrates.

All these regions were habitable during the greater part of the Ice Age, and there are Chellean implements on the surface in Iran and Arabia, and in gravels containing mammoth bones on the Caspian shore, to show that they were inhabited widely by man.

The diluvial thaw, however, brought disaster here. As was natural so far south, the thaw was very rapid, once the cold crisis was over ; violent torrents seamed deeply the superficial sediments of the Arabian ' slab ' and spread masses of debris, of which the great beds of Zubair gravels are an example. From the heights of the Zagros, similar torrents, descending more abruptly, brought down the vast quantities of heavy gravels which form the foothills of the Zagros range from near Khanikin to the neighbourhood of Borasjun, a process which still continues, though with finer sediments.[1]

Towards the close of the last pluvial period, perhaps 7,000 years ago, a long-headed race descended upon Iran, Mesopotamia, and Persia, and the shores of the Persian Gulf, presumably from Central Asia. It is apparent from the pottery, the weapons, and the manner of their life, as revealed by the debris of their rubbish mounds, that their material culture must have been considerably older than anything deposited on this site. With their arrival the written history of this region, however obscure, begins. Whether they displaced or absorbed a more primitive race already on the spot we do not know. But, as it seems that they were unacquainted with the cultivation of the date-tree, and as this invaluable adjunct to settled civilization, involving as it does constant skilled attention, figures in the earliest known inscriptions, it is permissible to suggest that the earliest denizens of the delta had acclimatized it and acquired a knowledge of artificial fertilization. The date-tree may well be ' the tree of life ' of Genesis, as suggested by Willcocks : it was, almost certainly, the most important single factor in the life of early man at this period and for very many years afterwards.

[1] It is estimated that the silt brought down annually by the Karun alone is equivalent to one million cubic yards, or 1,800,000 tons : the other streams which rise in the Zagros are probably jointly responsible for at least twice as much, apart from the Tigris and Euphrates which bring down 2½ million cubic yards between them, though not more than 1¼ million cubic yards of silt actually reaches the bar of the Shatt al Arab from all sources. The abnormal floods of January and February 1924, before the melting of the snow, inundated at least three-quarters of the plains south of Ahwaz and a large area to the north, with immense loss of livestock and great loss of human life.

III

THE PERSIAN GULF IN THE EARLIEST HISTORICAL TIMES

> Here is a crucible, where human kind
> Was scorched and buffeted by sun and wind
> Until the dross was shattered, and the gold
> Repaid God's alchemy an hundredfold.
>
> LORD LATYMER, *Downland Songs*.

THE very early history of the Persian Gulf and of the regions round its shores is largely conjectural and hypothetical. Our knowledge of it is based mainly on mythology, on deductions from ancient historical records that have come down to us, such as the Old Testament, cuneiform inscriptions on tablets, of which more and more are coming to light, and on the deductions of anthropologists, from the skulls and bones of early and modern races respectively.

It is fairly clear that, at a very early date, say 10,000 B.C., three separate branches of mankind were represented on the shores of the Gulf: the Dravidian, represented by the Oritae, along the Makran coast, now merged in their Baluch conquerors; the Semitic, on the Arabian coast, who had probably already displaced or absorbed the aboriginal 'Hamitic' Eur-African, or negrito aborigines; and the proto-Elamitic branch, at the head of the Gulf and as far east as Bushire.

By the Semites is generally understood the group of peoples known in later times as the Arameans (Syrians, &c.) in the north, the Babylonians and the Assyrians in the east, the Arabs in the south, and the Phoenicians, Hebrews, and Moabites in the west. They are the inhabitants of the region bounded by the Taurus and the mountains of Armenia and Iran, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, Egypt, and the Mediterranean. This area has been well described as a 'fertile crescent'. It is approximately a semicircle, open to the south, with the mountains behind and, in front, the desert with its oases and scanty grass-lands; the western horn of the crescent stretches along the Mediterranean, the eastern reaches the Persian Gulf and extends to Bushire. By a not too bold generalization, the history of south-west Asia has been styled 'an age-long struggle between

the mountain peoples of the north and the desert-wanderers of the grass-lands, for the possession of the " Fertile Crescent " '.[1]

By the term proto-Elamites is to be understood the Elamitic inhabitants who, before the dawn of continuous history, settled in the plains of south-west Persia, from Susa to Bushire; it is generally held that this race had their beginnings in Central Asia and gradually spread thence to the plateau of Iran, to Syria and Egypt, long before 4,000 B.C. There is some evidence that the earliest inhabitants of Anau, in Russian Turkistan, and Susa had a common origin, and it seems obvious that a long period must be assigned to the prehistoric civilization of Central Asia and Elam; investigations by Pézard[2] show that the mound near Sabzabad on the Bushire peninsula was occupied during this remote period, and it may be conjectured that this culture extended much farther east, perhaps as far as Bandar Abbas and the fertile lands of the Minab delta.

After the proto-Elamites came the Sumerians, a long-headed race, speaking agglutinative languages; the relation between them and their proto-Elamitic predecessors must be left to conjecture, but there is reason to think that they are a somewhat later branch of this Central Asian people, and that they reached the head of the Persian Gulf before 5,000 B.C., from the then fertile plains of Central Asia.

The question of the origin of the peoples inhabiting the shores of the Persian Gulf in remote times is not, however, primarily germane to our purpose: it is sufficient for us to know that, from the earliest period of which we have any certain knowledge, the Semitic races occupied the Arabian coast and the Kingdom of Elam, the latter comprising the plains of south-west Persia and the Sumerian territories of Ur.

We may now consider to what extent the Persian Gulf was a means of communication and intercourse. The Assyrian inscriptions, from the earliest to the latest period, make constant allusions to an island called *Niduk-Ki*, in the Akkadian tongue, and *Tilwun* or *Dilmun*, in Assyrian. This name, which may or may not refer to Bahrain, first occurs on a tablet giving an account of the great Sargon's career (*c.* 2872 B.C.), where he is said to have reached ' the lower sea ' or Persian Gulf, and the country of the 'black-heads', and to have reduced Niduk-Ki and another seaport.

[1] Breasted, quoted in *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. i, p. 182. The struggle has continued into the present century; Mosul is in the centre of the crescent.

[2] Pézard, M.

Another tablet which appears to be an account of the continuation of the same campaign, records that Sargon's successor, Naram-Sin, conquered the King of Apirak and his ally the King of *Magan*. This word is a compound of the Sumerian word *Ma*, 'ship', and was so named because its inhabitants were a sea-going people, whilst a text of the period of the King of Ur, Dungi (2450 B.C.), from Lagash, speaks of the shipwrights of Magan. Sumerian inscriptions consistently combine Magan with *Melukhkha*; the latter was probably a land on the south coast of the Persian Gulf, but, as the early navigators pushed their voyages farther, the ships rounded the coast of Arabia and came into the Red Sea, and the names of Magan and the neighbouring Melukhkha gradually extended westward with the result that, in late times, to the Assyrians, Melukhkha meant Ethiopia. The great blocks of diorite, of granite, and of basalt in its prismatic pillar form, which still lie about on the mounds of Abu Shahrain, south of Ur, are trophies of Magan, or of some land on the road to Magan, though, it may be, the basalt came down the Euphrates from the volcanic deposits of Kurdistan, and some of the diorite may have come from Jabal Sanam south of Zubair. That it did not come, for the most part, from Egypt seems clear, as the famous black diorite of Magan differs geologically from that of Egypt,[1] though its actual origin has not yet been ascertained.[2]

Magan was called the mountain of copper: a Sumerian epic refers to it as the land of dolerite. Gudea, King of Lagash (*c.* 2600 B.C.), also mentions the timber which came from Magan, Melukhkha, Gubi, and Dilmun. It was a land famous for goats, and in the Sumerian legend or Epic of Paradise of Dilmun the deity of Magan is called *Nindulla*, i. e. 'Queen of the flocks'. The reference to Magan as the copper mountain seems to indicate the inclusion within its boundaries of Jabal Akhdhar of Oman, where copper exists; and there seems good reason to regard Magan as synonymous with Oman, for diorite, dolerite, copper, and goats are all to be found there, and the timber was probably imported from India and re-exported thence, as it still is to-day. The dates also of Magan are associated in the syllabaries with those of Dilmun and

[1] *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. i, p. 416.

[2] On Hanjam Island lie some boulders of granite or diorite, the largest weighing several tons, which have been forced to the surface from a great depth by a salt-plug (*vide* p. 19); great blocks of similar stone are to be seen near Ur and Abu Shahrain, and the importation of such stone from 'Magan', in the days of Gudea, King of Lagash, is referred to in contemporary inscriptions.

Melukhkha: dates are to-day amongst the principal products of Oman, and 'Muscat dates' are well known in Europe.

Magan was so effectively invaded and conquered by Naram-Sin, in the early days of his reign, that Manium of Magan was honoured by having his name given to the city of *Manium-Ki*, which is mentioned in a temple record of the period of Dungi, four centuries after Naram-Sin; and we know that the inhabitants of Magan were loyal Sumerians who sent tribute to the great cults of Sumer. The land was also famous for the stone called *gug* (Sumerian) or *samtu* (Assyrian), which is supposed to be the Hebrew *shoham* (? onyx, beryl).

Gudea brought diorite from Magan. An inscription on a statue found at Tel-Lo mentions the construction of a ship for the goddess Bau, and refers to the sea voyage to Magan and Melukhkha. It is thus obvious that long sea voyages along the Arabian peninsula were already common in the first half of the third millennium.[1]

Nor was sea-borne trade at this time restricted to the coast of Arabia: according to one inscription, Gudea's ships brought to him, 'from the land of the goddess Ghanna and of the god Ningirsu, products of every description, from Magan, Melukhkha, Gubi, Niduk-Ki, and *from other lands, whatever their names may be*: from Melukhkha he brought "ushu" wood for the construction of the temple; in Gubi he felled "khuluppu" trees; from Magan diorite'. The words italicized seem to suggest that Gudea's ships did not visit the other lands in question, but that the products of every description referred to were re-exported from one of the ports specified.[2]

But there must have been communication—if not by sea, at all events by land—between northern India and the delta of the Shatt al Arab at a far earlier date, for an inscribed seal was found at Kish near Baghdad by Mr. E. Mackay, in 1922–3, which was identical with several seals found in northern India by Sir John Marshall. This discovery suggests not only regular communication but a common civilization, which may well ante-date, by several millennia, the earliest records of the past at present available to us.

[1] *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. i, p. 431.

[2] In further support of the existence of this sea-going traffic in the Persian Gulf we have the evidence of a clay tablet found at Ur, in 1926, by Mr. C. L. Woolley, which gives a list of wares imported into Sumer from Dilmun, viz. wood and stone of various kinds, fish eyes (pearls ?), copper, and ivory. The reverse of this tablet holds a note stating the objects to have been 'from the expedition of Dilmun', with mention of a ship; and a further note recording that they 'belong to the Temple of Nin-gal'.

We must not omit to inquire who were the skilled navigators responsible for what must have constituted, long before our era, a considerable and increasing volume of trade. The theory advanced by Dr. Theodore Bent was that they were Phoenicians, and that this race was responsible for the construction, over a very long period of years, of the vast number of sepulchral tombs that are to be seen in Bahrain Island, the existence and origin of which is one of the most fascinating of archaeological problems.[1] This view, however, does not commend itself to modern scholars.

The Phoenicians were Semites; their language differs only dialectically from Hebrew, and is related to Assyrian: it is certain that they can no longer be credited with the *invention* of writing, though, as merchants and traders, they no doubt did their share in spreading this art westwards, and it is known that in 1100 B.C. they were importing papyrus from Egypt to their settlements on the Syrian coast. There was a Minoan sea-power long before the Phoenicians are named in history, and the people we call Phoenicians are merely the heirs of an old-established system of intercourse. How much intercourse and movement lie outside our records must of course be entirely conjectural. It is at least certain that the 'Semitic' world was no secluded one. A vivid picture of Phoenician traffic is given in Ezekiel's description of Tyre;[2] and Hebrew and Greek writers concur in representing the Phoenicians as skilful and daring navigators who made long voyages and brought back the productions of distant lands to exchange with their more sedentary neighbours. Unfortunately, no trace of their native literature remains, the length and precise directions of their distant voyages are not known with certainty, and whether they actually navigated the Eastern waters is open to doubt. They claimed an historical tradition extending over 30,000 years. Herodotus, however, was told that Tyre had been founded 2,300 years previously, but it is impossible to substantiate this. He says that the Phoenicians claim to have come from the Persian Gulf,[3] but we have no sort of evidence in support of this statement, and quite another tradition (mentioned by Justin, xviii. 3) associates them with the Dead Sea. Strabo[4] says:

'The merchants of Gerra generally carry the Arabian merchandise and aromatics by land; but Aristobulus says, on the contrary, that they fre-

[1] Bent (1). [2] Chap. XXVII.

[3] 'The Persian learned men say that the Phoenicians . . . came to our seas from the sea which is called Red, and having settled in the country which they still occupy, at once began to make long voyages.' Herodotus, I. i. [4] XVI. iii. 3. 4.

quently travel into Babylonia on rafts, and thence sail up the Euphrates to Thapsacus [1] with their cargoes, but afterwards carry them by land to all parts of the country. On sailing further (i. e. south from Gerra), there are other islands, Tyrus and Aradus, which have temples resembling those of the Phoenicians. The inhabitants of these islands (if we are to believe them) say that the islands and cities bearing the same name as those of the Phoenicians are their own colonies.[2] These islands are distant from Teredon ten days' sail, and from the promontory at the mouth of the gulf at Makae one day's sail.'

Both Herodotus and Strabo thus implicitly indicate the existence of places of trade activity, and the presence of 'Phoenicians' on the shores of the Persian Gulf.

Pliny [3] gives a description of the same coast. He says:

'We will now proceed to describe the coast (i. e. of Arabia) after leaving Charax,[4] which was first explored by order of King Epiphanes. We first came to the place where the mouth of the Euphrates formerly existed, the river Salsus, and the Promontory of Chaldone, from which spot, the sea along the coast, for an extent of fifty miles, bears more the aspect of a series of whirlpools, than of ordinary sea; the river Achenus, and then a desert tract for a space of one hundred miles, until we come to the island of Ichara; the gulf of Capeus, on the shore of which dwell the Gaulopes and the Chateni, and then the gulf of Gerra. Here we find the city of Gerra, five miles in circumference, with towers built of square blocks of salt. Fifty miles from the coast, lying in the interior, is the region of Attene, and opposite to Gerra is the island of Tylos,[5] as many miles distant from the shore; it is famous for the vast number of its pearls, and has a town of the same name; in its vicinity there is a smaller island (Aradus), distant from a promontory on the larger one twelve miles and a half.'

The necropolis on Bahrain Island, to which reference has already been made, extends for some miles from a point near Abu Ali, a considerable village on the northern part of the island, about six miles south-west of the port of Manama. It consists of a vast area of mounds or tumuli, the largest being from forty to fifty yards through and from forty to fifty feet in height. Those which were opened and studied by Captain Durand in 1879, and Theodore Bent in 1889, and, in 1906–7, by Major (now Lt.-Col.) Prideaux, all show considerable similarity of plan.[6]

[1] Situated on the Euphrates, just above the modern Raqqa.

[2] The little port of Sur on the Oman coast closely resembles in appearance the Phoenician port of the same name on the Syrian coast.

[3] VI. 32.

[4] Or Charax Spasinu, originally founded by Alexander, situated somewhere between the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates; possibly the modern Mohammerah.

[5] The Tyrus of Strabo (present-day Bahrain).

[6] See, Durand, E. L.; Bent, J. T. (1); Rawlinson, H. C. (7); and Prideaux, F. B.

III. THE SEPULCHRAL MOUNDS AT BAHRAIN

Of the mounds so far investigated, the entrance faces west; the building is two-storied, of carefully hewn blocks of stone, the lower story being more lofty than the upper. On both sides of a passage or corridor, leading to the east, are niches or chambers which were designed to hold ' cists ', stacked one above the other. The roof of the passage is formed of transverse blocks of flat stone, laid from wall to wall, and the latter, where still intact, are covered with coarse-grained plaster. There are small holes beside the niches, in which apparently wooden bars could be placed right across the corridor, on which offerings to the dead and votive gifts were to be hung. In one of the larger mounds examined by Durand, the chambers on either side of the passage measured roughly seven feet in length, three feet in breadth, and five and a half feet in height. He found a black stone, inscribed with Assyrian characters, which was deciphered by Sir Henry Rawlinson.[1]

There is as yet no clue to the historical origin of these tombs. Bones of men and animals were found, including two skulls, small portions of an ivory ox, fragments of circular boxes, a golden amulet, and quantities of whole and broken earthenware vessels ornamented in a peculiar fashion with black stripes. No trace of any inscriptions has yet been discovered, and these finds do not give a secure foundation for any archaeological hypothesis. Mr. Mackay, who made a fresh investigation in 1924, is understood to have reached the conclusion that the site was probably a sacred burial ground, to which corpses were brought from the mainland for interment: the nature of the pottery, the confused position of the bones, the predominance of male remains, and the absence of any populous centre on the mainland all point to this conclusion.

The plan on which the tombs are built agrees in striking fashion with those known of the Phoenicians; this was even noticed by Strabo, who says that ' the islands Tyrus and Aradus have temples resembling those of the Phoenicians '.[2] The use of the double chamber or sepulchre has a Phoenician parallel, for there are examples of two-storied tombs in the cemetery of Amrit in Phoenicia, in Sardinia, and at Carthage. The similarity of the place-names, Tylus—Tyrus and Aradus [3] (given to the islands by both Strabo and Pliny) in the Persian Gulf, and Sur and Arvad on the Phoenician coast, is also noteworthy, but in Rawlinson's opinion inconclusive regarding their common origin.

Theodore Bent, relying on these facts alone, called the tombs

[1] Op. cit. [2] XII. 3.

[3] Muharraq Island is still sometimes called Arad by the Arabs.

'Phoenician' without further consideration, but on this matter Dr. D. G. Hogarth remarks: 'The evidence for calling them Phoenician is worth practically nothing in the light of more recent research. The evidence on which the conclusion was arrived at was certain ivories in the British Museum originally found by Layard at Nimrud, which were put down as Phoenician because it was not then known that anybody else was capable of producing that kind of art. We now know that it is not in any way impossible that they should have been produced by peoples of North Syria, or by the Assyrians themselves, and the great bulk of authority now declares that they are not Phoenician.'[1]

It results from the foregoing remarks, that the extent to which the Phoenicians were, if at all, engaged in trade, or resident in the Persian Gulf, is unknown or doubtful; it is, however, certain that important trade centres existed at several points on the Arabian shore from the remotest ages, and there is no reason to think that sea-borne traffic was otherwise than continuous during the first four millennia before our era.

Babylonian trade on the Persian Gulf. That the Babylonians possessed a maritime, as well as a fluvial navigation of their own, may be gathered from various sources. The ancient authors are unanimous in describing the Babylonians as a people fond of magnificence and accustomed to a multitude of artificial wants, which they could not have supplied except by commercial relations with many countries, some of which were remote. Doubtless many of these commodities were brought overland; others, on the other hand, could only be obtained from overseas. In consequence of the very favourable position of Babylon it became the principal state of western Asia, and nature seemed to have formed it for the great seat of the international commerce of Asia. Situated between the Indus and the Mediterranean, it was the natural mart of such precious wares of the East as were esteemed in the West. Witness its proximity to the Persian Gulf, the great highway of trade which nature seems to have prepared for the admission of seafaring nations of the Indian seas into the midst of Asia, especially when considered in connexion with its vicinity to the two great rivers Euphrates and Tigris, the continuation, as it were, of this great highway, and opening a communication with the Euxine and Caspian Seas.

When we come down to the later or Neo-Babylonian period,

[1] *G.J.*, 1920, lvi, Dec.

the possibilities of transport by the way of the Gulf were clearly the object of royal attention. Nebuchadnezzar II (604–561 B. C.) saw fit to construct a harbour in the swamps, and built the town of Teredon [1] to the west of the Euphrates. One of his objects was to protect his country against Arab raids. Vincent supposes that the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar had for its object the extension of Indian commerce to the Persian Gulf and Babylon, and from thence, through the empire of this king, to Damascus and Syria. He quotes a fragment of Abydenus concerning the works designed by Nebuchadnezzar near Babylon, according to which the latter made two canals, constructed large sluices, confined the waters of the Tigris by a dam, and built the city of Teredon as a defence against the incursions of the Arabs. This city, he says, situated at the mouth of the Pasitigris, was a considerable emporium. As lately as the age of Nearchus it afforded a market for Arab and Indian productions.[2]

That the Babylonians had a maritime navigation when their power was at its height (i. e. about the seventh century B. C.) is also borne out by the prediction of Isaiah: 'Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and I will bring down all of them as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, in the ships of their rejoicing'.[3] A graphic description of a people no less proud of their ships than of their cities and ramparts.

But a more definite statement is handed down in the Greek writers. Aeschylus, in his play of the Persians, enumerating the nations who composed the army of the great King, speaks as follows: 'Babylon too, that abounds in gold, sends forth a promiscuous multitude, *who both embark in ships*, and boast of their skill in archery.' The accounts of other writers, dispersed as they are through a number of different works and sometimes at variance with each other, nevertheless concur in representing Babylon as a city which received the merchandise of the South (Arabian and Indian products) by way of the Persian Gulf. And these writers make it possible to discern the course and extent of this trade, and sometimes to give an obscure glimpse of its character.

To take, among other writers, Strabo's information concerning Gerra and Tylos. Gerra, according to him, was a Chaldean colony

[1] Or Diridotis. 'A town in Babylonia—the emporium of the sea-borne trade in frankincense and all other fragrant productions of Arabia' (McCrindle (2)).

[2] Vincent, W. (2), p. 536.

[3] Isaiah xliii. 14 (R.V.).

(i. e. from Babylon), which had a flourishing trade and apparently constant intercourse with Babylon.[1] Agatharchides [2] assures us that the inhabitants of Gerra were one of the richest people in the world, for which they were indebted to their traffic in Arabian and Indian merchandise, which they transported into the West by means of caravans and to Babylon by their ships. The commodities imported by the Babylonians by way of Gerra were largely frankincense and spices, of which they consumed great quantities.[3] Another commodity which possibly found its way thither was cotton, for, if Theophrastus [4] was correctly informed, there were at Tylos such large plantations of cotton-trees (probably tree cotton) that a considerable part of the island was quite covered with them; and according to Pliny, Little Tylos, or Aradus, was still more productive in cotton. More than this, Theophrastus, speaking of Tylos, says: 'There is in this island a species of timber for shipbuilding, which under water resists all tendency to putrefaction, lasting for upwards of two hundred years; but out of water it decays much sooner.' Babylon, deficient in timber, with the exception of the palm and cypress tree, both of which are little suited for shipbuilding, would have found an insurmountable obstacle in the way of navigation if the deficiency could not have been supplied from elsewhere. It is pretty certain, however, that such timber—doubtless teak—was imported into Tylos from India: it cannot have grown on the island.

The extent to which the Babylonians themselves actually controlled the maritime activity of the Persian Gulf is involved in obscurity. Certain it is, however, that on the rise of the Persian Empire, all references to these people as participators in the maritime trade of the Gulf disappear, and the Arabian navigators come into prominence. It may even be that the actual navigation of its waters was throughout in the hands of the latter, and that both Phoenicians and Babylonians were no more than the middlemen who received the commodities carried by the Arabians.

The Persians and the Gulf. Under the Persian Empire during the Achaemenian dynasty (sixth–fourth century B. C.), the naviga-

[1] 'A distinction is sometimes made between Babylonia and Chaldea; the latter comprising the south, and the former the northern division. Usually, however, and certainly more correctly, they were considered as synonymous' (Heeren).

[2] *De Rubro Mare* (Hudson, i. 60).

[3] According to Herodotus, a thousand talents of frankincense were annually consumed in the temple of Belus alone, by the Chaldeans.

[4] *Enquiry into Plants*, iv. 7.

tion of the Persian Gulf received a severe set-back. The decline seems to have begun in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, when the merchants of Tyre turned their attention from this market to that of the Red Sea route. The Persians, moreover, were in constant apprehension, not without reason, of their maritime provinces being laid waste by some foreign fleet. Babylon on the Euphrates, and Susa on the Diz, a tributary then as now of the Karun (Eulaeus), a depot for tribute from many nations, were both situated on navigable rivers, which afforded easy access into the heart of their dominions. No great naval power, in the modern sense of the term, would be requisite for such an attempt: squadrons of daring pirates, who have never been wanting in the Persian Gulf, would have sufficed to plunder if not to destroy their principal cities.

For the purpose of barring the way to hostile craft, the Persians are said by early writers to have determined to make the entrance to the principal river, viz. the Karun, inaccessible for navigation. To this end, according to Strabo,[1] they obstructed the course of the stream at various points by masses of stone, of the nature of dams, forming 'cataracts'. These remained until the time of Alexander, who, ever alive to the importance of maritime intercourse and trade, sought to remove them, on his return from India; but before the completion of his design he died. It is, however, practically certain that these dams were in every case made solely for irrigation purposes, as they are made even now on the Lower Euphrates: such dams existed on the Lower Karun until the end of the eighteenth century, but they were always provided with a by-pass, to admit of the passage of small craft.[2] It does not, in any case, appear that the Persians were ever seriously threatened by sea, and though the maritime commerce of Babylon under the Persians may have been much reduced, it never entirely ceased, and maritime activity in these waters seemed to have returned, at least temporarily, with the conquest of Alexander the Great, in the latter part of the fourth century B.C. From this time forward we have definite evidence of maritime intercourse between the Persian Gulf ports and India and the East; but during the period of Roman supremacy, and when she held the first place in the Eastern Seas, the Red Sea route was the main channel of communication between West and East, and remained so until the decline of this empire, in the early part of the sixth century A. D.

[1] XVI. i. 9.

[2] One such by-pass still exists, viz. the island of Dha, opposite Marid, where a dam was built to keep the Karun to its old bed, past Qubban, to the Khor Musa.

IV

THE CLASSICAL WRITERS

'Antiquities, or remnants of history, are, as was said, *tamquam tabula naufragii*, when industrious persons, by an exact and scrupulous diligence and observation, out of monuments ... traditions ... passages of books that concern not story, and the like, do save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time.

'In these kinds of imperfect histories I do assign no deficience, for they are *tamquam imperfecte mista*, and therefore any deficience in them is but their nature.'

BACON, *Of the Advancement of Learning*, II.

OUR survey of happenings in the Persian Gulf has now brought us to about the fourth century B.C. and the period of Alexander the Great, in whose mind the idea of a mighty sea-traffic between Babylon, the capital of his eastern empire, and India shaped itself. During the Persian domination the sea-route between the Persian Gulf and India seems to have been forgotten or neglected, although these waters had been explored for Darius Hystaspes by the Greek Scylax of Caryanda. Herodotus [1] tells us that Darius, wishing to know where the Indus issued into the sea, sent some ships, on board of which were Scylax and others in whom the king had the greatest confidence. They set out from Caspatyrus (Upper Indus) 'and sailed down the river towards the east and the sunrise till they came to the sea'; then turning towards the west they sailed along by the sea till they ultimately arrived, in the thirtieth month of their voyage, at the head of the Arabian Gulf (Red Sea). Herodotus adds, somewhat vaguely, that 'after this circumnavigation, Darius subdued the Indians, and made use of this sea'.

We are indebted to Greek and Roman writers, especially the former, for what knowledge we have of conditions and places in our region, in the centuries preceding and immediately following the Christian Era. The writers of this period, however, with the exception of Arrian, cast little definite light upon the matter. Though Arrian wrote in the second century, his narrative takes precedence, in point of time, over all the other classical authorities, for he has preserved to us in his work on India (*The Indika*) the substance of the Journal of the voyage of Nearchus, the Admiral of Alexander the Great, made in the fourth century.[2] The

[1] IV. 44.

[2] Vincent, W. (3). Dr. William Vincent was a former Dean of Westminster and Master of Westminster School: Vincent Square in London is named after him. He died on 21st December 1815 (Chancellor, *History of the Squares of London*, 1907).

abstract given by Arrian is so full that, for geographical purposes, it may well stand in place of the original work.

The Voyage.[1] Alexander having reached the limit of his conquests in the East, prepared to return (326 B. C.). He proceeded to the Hydaspes (now the Jhelum) where he partly built and partly collected a fleet numbering some 1,800 vessels consisting of war-galleys and transports, which he manned with crews selected from such men of his troops as had a knowledge of seamanship. Much of the siege train went on board the fleet of Nearchus and was once used with great effect to cover the landing of an attacking party on the coast of Baluchistan, an almost if not wholly unique instance of the employment of engines on ship-board in Greek times.[2]

The fleet when ready moved slowly down the Hydaspes, the Akesines, and Indus, and at the end of ten months reached *Killouta*, a station on the western branch of the Indus at no great distance from the sea; the fleet was accompanied and protected by Alexander and his army. Alexander then set out on his return to Persia, leaving instructions with Nearchus to start on his voyage as soon as the cessation of the monsoon winds should render navigation safe. It was the king's intention to march near to the coast, in close touch with his fleet, and to collect at convenient points supplies for the victualling of the fleet; but finding this impracticable, he was obliged to follow a route somewhat farther inland, through *Gedrosia*,[3] with Susa as his destination. Strabo's version of Alexander's return march is as follows:

'The summer was purposely chosen for leaving India, for at that season it rains in Gedrosia, and the rivers and wells are filled, but in winter they fail. The rain falls in the higher part to the north, and near the mountains: when the rivers swell, the plains near the sea are watered, and the wells are also filled. Alexander sent persons before him into the desert country to dig wells and to prepare stations for himself and his fleet.

'Having separated his forces into three divisions, he set out with one division through Gedrosia, keeping at the utmost from the sea not more than 500 stadia, in order to secure the coast for his fleet; but he frequently approached the sea-side, although the beach was impracticable and rugged.

[1] See Vincent, W. (1) and (3); McCrindle (2).

[2] Hogarth, *Jour. Philology*, 1888, xvii.

[3] The modern Makran. According to Strabo, 'a country less exposed to the heat of the sun than India, but more so than the rest of Asia. As it is without fruits and water, except in summer, it is not much better than the country of the Ikhthyophagi. But it produces aromatics, particularly nard and myrrh, in such quantity, that the army of Alexander used them on the march for tent coverings and beds' (XV. ii. 3).

The second division he sent forward under the command of Craterus through the interior, with a view of reducing Ariana, and of proceeding to the same places to which he himself was directing his march. The third division, the fleet, he intrusted to Nearchus and Onesicritus, his master pilot, giving them orders to take up convenient positions in following him, and to sail along the coast parallel to his line of march.' [1]

Nearchus himself remained at Killouta for about a month and then, during a temporary lull in the monsoon, proceeded slowly down the river-mouth into the main, to an island called *Krokala*. ' Weighing from Krokala they had on their right hand a mountain called *Eiros*, and on their left a flat island almost level with the sea, . . . and came to anchor in a well-sheltered harbour, which Nearchus, finding it large and commodious, designated Alexander's Harbour . . . protected by an island lying about two stadia off its entrance.' [2]

The expedition took its departure from this harbour in the beginning of November (326 B. C.), and after putting in at the mouth of the *Arabis* (Purali), the frontier of 'the last Indian people living in this direction ', sailed westward along the coast of what is now known as Makran, peopled in those days by the *Oreitai*.[3]

At Krokala, ' agreeably to orders given by Alexander, corn had been collected by Leonnatos for the victualling of the vessels, and stores sufficient to last ten days were put on board '. Here also the ships, which had been damaged by stress of the weather experienced, were repaired, ' while all the mariners that Nearchus considered deficient in fortitude for the enterprise, he consigned to Leonnatos to be taken on by land '. Anchored near the estuary of a winter torrent called the *Tomeros* (Hingol), their landing was opposed by the Oreitai, who ' lived on marshy ground near the shore in close and suffocating cabins '. Nearchus gives us a glimpse of these people, who ' were not without courage ' and prepared to attack the strangers when landing ; they carried thick spears about six cubits long, not headed with iron, but hardened at the point by fire. But ' the barbarians, terrified by the glittering arms and the rapidity of the landing, and wounded by arrows and other missiles, against which they had no protection, being all

[1] XV. ii. 3 and 4. [2] The description seems to refer to Karachi harbour.

[3] A full enumeration of the various stopping-places and anchorages does not come within the scope of this work : it is sufficient to remark that most of the stations mentioned by Nearchus have been definitely located, and the distances he gives, though uniformly overstated, are remarkably accurate when proportionately considered.

IV. ALEXANDER THE GREAT

but entirely naked, fled '. Some who were captured ' had shaggy hair all over their body; their nails resembled the claws of wild beasts, and were used, it would seem, for dividing fish and splitting the softer kinds of wood. Things of hard consistency they cut with sharp stones, for iron they had none. As to clothing they wore the skins of wild beasts, and occasionally also the thick skins of the large sorts of fish.'

At a place called *Malana* (probably Ras Malin) the fleet left the coast of the Oreitai behind and continued its course along the barren and desolate shore of Gedrosia, ' an inland province through which Alexander led his army, but this with difficulty, for the region was so desolate that the troops in the whole course of the expedition never suffered such direful extremities as on this march '. The sea-board here was inhabited by a people called the *Ikhthyophagi*. Passing *Bagisara* (Ormara or Hormarah Bay) and other places, they came to an island called *Karbine*, where they met with some show of hospitality from the villagers, who brought presents of sheep and fish, the mutton having ' a fishy taste like the flesh of sea-birds, for the sheep feed on fish, there being no grass in the place '.

After anchoring at *Kissa* they reached *Mosarna*, a projecting headland and village, where they took on board Hydrakes, a Gedrosian, as pilot, who undertook to conduct them as far as *Karmania*. The ease with which Nearchus obtained a competent pilot suggests that coastal navigation was well developed on the Persian as well as on the Arabian coast. At *Barna* were many palm trees and a ' garden wherein were myrtles and flowers from which the men wove chaplets for their hair; and they saw for the first time cultivated trees and met with natives in a condition above that of mere savages ' (possibly Sumerian colonists from the north). At *Kophas*, a haven with plenty of good water, the fishermen used small ' boats which they did not manage with oars fastened to a row-lock, but with paddles which they thrust on this side and on that into the water, like diggers using a spade '.[1] After passing *Kyzia* they came to a small town situated on Gwatar Bay, on an eminence, the country round producing ' corn, as the thick stubble which they saw covering the fields

[1] ' The natives use the same kind of boat to this day; it is a curve made of several planks nailed or sewn together in a rude manner with cord made from the bark of date trees and called *kair* (i. e. coir), the whole being then smeared over with dammer or pitch ' Kempthorne (1). See also De Thevenot (1), who describes similar craft.

near the shore clearly proved', and, being short of supplies, they made a hostile demonstration and compelled the inhabitants to yield such stores as they possessed, 'consisting of a kind of meal made from fish roasted, and a little wheat and barley, for the chief diet of these people was fish with bread added as a relish'.

Passing a cape and a harbour with good anchorage, probably in what is now Chahbar Bay, they reached *Kanasis*, reduced to such extremities for food that they cut down the wild palms here found, using the tender heads to support life. On sailing from this place, Nearchus put out farther to sea, apprehensive lest the men, famished and despairing, should desert the ship; after a further cruise of 1,100 stadia, they left behind them the shores of the Ikhthyophagi on which they had suffered such severe privations. They were, at about this time, told of an island called *Nosala*, some 100 stadia from the mainland, which according to local tradition was sacred to the sun. No one ever willingly visited this island, and if any one was carried to it unawares he was never seen any more.

The course of the fleet now lay along Karmania;[1] the direction changed, and they 'sailed no longer towards the sunset, but turned the heads of the vessels more to the north-west'. They had in effect, at *Badis*, rounded Cape Jask and were heading for the entrance to the Strait of Ormuz. They came at length to anchor 'off a barren coast, whence they descried a headland projecting far out into the sea . . . about a day's sail distant. Persons acquainted with those regions asserted that this cape belonged to Arabia, and was called *Maketa*,[2] whence cinnamon and other products were exported to the Assyrians.'

Continuing past *Neoptana* they anchored at the mouth of the river *Anamis* (Minab) in a country called *Harmozeia*, then, as now, 'a hospitable region rich in every production except only the olive'. This district lies on either side of the Minab River and abounds to-day in orange groves, orchards, and vineyards.[3] The name was later transferred to the island of Hormuz when the inhabitants fled thither to escape the tyranny of the rulers of the mainland. At Neoptana the crews landed and enjoyed a respite from their many privations. Nearchus, learning that Alexander was not more than five days' journey from the sea, proceeded inland to meet him. During his absence the ships were

[1] Karmania extended from Cape Jask to Ras Naband, and included the districts now called Kirman and Laristan. Its capital, according to Ptolemy, was *Karmana* (now Kirman). [2] Ras Musandam. [3] Kempthorne (1).

repaired and provisioned, and on his return to camp, after much adventure, the voyage was resumed.

The fleet now passed a desolate rocky island called *Organa* (Hormuz) and anchored at ' one of considerable size and inhabited, called *Oarakta* (Qishm), which produced vines, palmtrees and corn '. Pursuing their course along this island, they anchored at a place where another island (identified with Hanjam) was visible at a distance of about 40 stadia, which they learned was sacred to Poseidon or Neptune, and after a further course attained the limits of the coast of Karmania at *Kataia* (probably Qais), ' a desert island and very flat said to be sacred to Hermes and Aphrodite '.

The course now lay along the coast of *Persis*, and after passing a desert island called *Kaikander* (Hindarabi) they came to another inhabited island, where Nearchus notices ' there is here a fishery for pearl as there is in the Indian Sea '. In due course they reached the mouth of the *Sitakos* (Mund River), where ' it was troublesome to land '. Nearchus observes that ' all along the coast of Persis the fleet had to be navigated through shoals and breakers and oozy canals '.

After *Hieratis*, sailing along the shore, the fleet reached ' a peninsula named *Mesambria*, wherein were many gardens and all kinds of fruit '—clearly the peninsula on which stands the modern town of Bushire. On the way to the next anchorage at the river *Granis* (probably the Rud-Hilleh), near which was a palace, a stranded whale fifty cubits in length was observed, ' attended by a great number of dolphins, larger than are ever seen in the Mediterranean '. *Rhogonis*, a winter torrent (where now stands Bandar Rig), was the next anchorage, then *Brizana*, then the mouth of a river called the *Arosis* (the modern Tab or Hindiyan), which Nearchus described as ' the greatest of all the rivers that in the course of the voyage fell into the outer ocean ', and which formed then, as now, the boundary between Persis and Susiana.

The fleet had reached the head of the Persian Gulf, and the course thereafter was almost entirely restricted to the open sea, ' the coast being full of shoals and beset with breakers ', which made approach to the land dangerous, as it still is. After anchoring at *Kataderbis*(Daira wa Buna Island?) and proceeding 1,500 stadia, the fleet ' dropped anchor at the mouth of the Euphrates near a town in Babylonia called *Diridotis* [1]—the emporium of the

[1] Called by other writers Teredon, the site of which has been variously placed : by Mannert on Bubiyan Island, while Chesney fixes its position at Jabal Sanam,

sea-borne trade in frankincense and all the other fragrant productions of Arabia'. Nearchus had passed the mouth of the Tigris unawares, and receiving intelligence that Alexander was marching towards Susa, retraced his course from Diridotis, entered the *Pasitigris* or *Euleaus*,[1] and finally anchored in its stream immediately below a bridge (at Ahwaz) which carried the highway from Persis to Susa.[2] Here the land and sea forces were reunited and the voyage was at an end. The date on which the fleet anchored at the bridge has been fixed by Vincent as the 24th February 325 B. C., so that the whole voyage was performed in 146 days.

There can be but little doubt that Alexander entertained other projects of exploration, among them the circumnavigation of Arabia, from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea; the success

a hill near the Pallacopas branch of the Euphrates, some 12 miles south-west of Zubair. See also foot-note, p. 33.

[1] The Ulai of the Prophet Daniel, now the river Karun, which entered the sea, until the middle or end of the eighteenth century, past Qubban and through the Khor Musa. It was connected, however, with the Shatt al Arab, from very early times, by a canal from Marid to the mouth of the Bahmishir stream. This reach of the river is known to this day as the *Haffār* or 'dug-out'. De Thevenot, in 1665, described it as a mere canal down which his vessel had to be poled, the vast proportion of the Karun stream still, in his day, entering the sea at the head of the Khor Musa. This was still the case as late as 1766, when Mr. Skipp, the East India Company's factor at Basra, 'went through the Haffar' in order to meet the Turkish Commander at Qubban (which was then Turkish territory) to press his claims against the Kaab Arabs.

[2] The full text of Arrian describing this last stage of the voyage runs as follows: 'Here (at Diridotis) intelligence etc. having been received that Alexander was marching towards Susa, they retraced their course from Diridotis so as to join him by sailing up the Pasitigris. They had now Susis on their left hand, and were coasting the shores of a lake into which the Tigris empties itself, a river, which flowing from Armenia past Nineveh, a city once of yore great and flourishing, encloses between itself and the Euphrates the tract of country which from its position between the two rivers is called Mesopotamia. It is a distance of 600 stadia from the entrance into the lake up to the river's mouth at Aginis, a village in the province of Susis distant from the city of Susa 500 stadia. The length of the voyage along the coast of the Susians to the mouth of the Pasitigris was 2000 stadia. Weighing from the mouth of the river they sailed up its stream through a fertile and populous country, and having proceeded 150 stadia dropped anchor, awaiting the return of certain messengers whom Nearchus had sent off to ascertain where the king was. The messengers having returned with tidings that Alexander was approaching, the fleet resumed its voyage up the river and anchored near the bridge by which Alexander intended to lead his army to Susa. In that same place the troops were united.'

(600 stadia say 68 miles
500 „ „ 57 „
150 „ „ 17 „ .)

with which Nearchus completed his enterprise gave favourable prospects of success for this scheme also, and he ordered the construction of numerous vessels which were to be assembled at Babylon.[1] In the meantime tentative expeditions were dispatched to explore the western shore of the Persian Gulf. One of these, under Archias, proceeded as far as Tylos (cf. p. 30). A second explorer, Androsthenes, a native of Thasos, advanced, so we are told by Arrian, somewhat farther; while a third, Hieron, a native of Soli, reached the farthest point of all, though it is doubtful whether he doubled the promontory of Maketa (see p. 40).

The reports of these navigators appear to have been of a not encouraging kind, nevertheless Nearchus was ordered to undertake the circumnavigation of the peninsula of Arabia; he was about to depart when Alexander died, in 323 B. C.

Having examined conditions in the Persian Gulf over three hundred years before the Christian Era in the light of Arrian's narrative, we may turn to other classical writers and see to what extent they add to our knowledge of the region in the centuries immediately following. First in chronological order comes Megasthenes, writing in the time of Seleucus Nicator (312–281 B. C.), whose work has unfortunately perished, but was quoted largely by Arrian and Strabo. He wrote almost entirely about India, of which he had a first-hand knowledge, as ambassador to the court of Sandracottus, king of the Prasii, at his capital on the Ganges. Megasthenes was among the first to give definite information about *Taprobane* (Ceylon), which place, later, comes gradually into prominence. He speaks of the abundance of gold and pearls produced in this island, information which he obtained from merchants who traded there, and this may be taken as pointing to the early existence of maritime trade between the Persian Gulf and the Far East.

To Eratosthenes of Cyrene (276–194 B. C.), the Alexandrine geographer, we are indebted for an advance in our knowledge of Arabia, and it should be remembered that Strabo, writing three hundred years later, was largely dependent on this writer

[1] Strabo, XVI. i. 11, says: 'He (Alexander) contemplated making himself master of the country (Arabia); and he had already provided a fleet and places of rendezvous; and had built vessels in Phoenicia and at Cyprus, some of which were in separate pieces, others were in parts, fastened together by bolts. These, after being conveyed to Thapsacus in seven distances of a day's march, were then to be transported down the river to Babylon. He constructed other boats in Babylonia, from cypress trees in the groves and parks, for there is a scarcity of timber in Babylonia.'

for his account of the peninsula and of the Persian Gulf. Strabo cites Eratosthenes as stating that:

'They say that the mouth (of the Persian Gulf) is so narrow, that from Harmozi,[1] the promontory of Karmania, may be seen the promontory of Maka, in Arabia. From the mouth, the coast on the right hand is circular, and at first inclines a little from Karmania towards the east, then to the north, and afterwards to the west as far as Teredon and the mouth of the Euphrates. In an extent of about 10,000 stadia, it comprises the coast of the Karmanians, Persians, and Susians, and in part of the Babylonians.'

It is to Eratosthenes, likewise, that Strabo owes the information regarding the exploration of the Arabian coast at the orders of Alexander, and for the description he gives of the mart of Gerra and the islands of Tylos and Aradus. Eratosthenes himself derived from Nearchus and Orthagoras the information that

'an island Ogyris [2] lies to the south, in the open sea, at the distance of 2,000 stadia from Karmania', and that 'in this island is shown the sepulchre of Erythras, a large mound, planted with wild palms. He was the King of the Country, and the sea received its name from him.'

Eratosthenes (if Strabo quotes him correctly) makes a curious statement regarding the 'Red Sea' (here meaning the Persian Gulf), to the effect that

'along the whole course of the Red Sea, in the deep part of the water, grow trees resembling the laurel and the olive. When the tide ebbs, the whole trees are visible above the water, and at the full tide they are sometimes entirely covered. This is the more singular because the coast inland has no trees.'

The reference is probably to mangrove swamps, which are common on the mainland near Qishm—or, it may be, to coral. This passage has not escaped Bacon's all-embracing curiosity, and he devotes a special paragraph thereto in his *Natural History* (vii. 613).

Eratosthenes was familiar with Taprobane, though he had erroneous ideas of its position; unfortunately, in the fragments of his work which have been preserved, he gives no further insight into maritime relations of this island with our region. But his description of the Tigris and Euphrates is of great interest:

'The rivers, flowing from Armenia towards the south, after having passed the Gordyaean mountains, and having formed a great circle which embraces the vast country of Mesopotamia, turn towards the rising of the sun in

[1] Probably Kuhistak on the Biyaban coast, opposite Ras Musandam.
[2] Hormuz.

the winter and the south, particularly the Euphrates, which, continually approaching nearer and nearer to the Tigris, passes by the rampart of Semiramis,[1] and at about 200 stadia from the village of Opis, thence it flows through Babylon, and so discharges itself into the Persian Gulf. Thus the figure of Mesopotamia and Babylon resemble the cushion of a rower's bench.'

Gerra, already in the time of Eratosthenes, had become an important centre of trade—the spices and other productions of the southern districts of Arabia, as well as of the opposite coasts of Africa, being brought thither by Gerraean caravans and sent thence to Babylon and Seleucia, the caravans taking forty days for the overland journey from Hadhramaut. Similar caravans carried on communication from *Aelana* (on the Gulf of Akaba), the port of Petra, which was already an important centre of trade. According to Eratosthenes (as quoted by Strabo), the Arabian peninsula was divided into four districts inhabited respectively by the Minaeans, the Sabaeans whose capital was Mariaba (Mareb), the Kattabanians (sc. the Bani Qahtan, the son of Joktan), and the Khatramotitae (sc. of Hadhramaut).

Eratosthenes appears to have been the first to mention the existence of petroleum, or its allied products, in the Gulf region. He says: 'Asphaltus is found in great abundance in Babylonia. The liquid asphaltus, which is called naphtha, is found in Susiana . . . it is of a singular nature. When it is brought near the fire, the fire catches it; and if a body smeared over with it is brought near the fire, it burns with a flame, which it is impossible to extinguish, except with a large quantity of water.'[2]

Posidonius (*c.* 135–51 B.C.), according to Strabo, also says there are 'springs of naphtha in Babylonia, some of which produce white, others black, naphtha; the first of these, I mean the white naphtha, which attracts flame is liquid sulphur; the second or black naphtha, is liquid asphaltus, and is burnt in lamps instead of oil'.[3]

Pliny also makes reference to the presence of naphtha in the region of the Persian Gulf:

'Naphtha', he says, 'is a substance of a similar nature (i. e. to Maltha, so called about Babylon, and in the territory of the Astaceni, in Parthia), flowing like liquid bitumen. . . . The summit of Cophantus, in Bactria, burns during the night; and this is the case in Media and at Sittacene, on the borders of Persia; likewise at Susa, at the White Tower, from fifteen

[1] Thought by Rawlinson to be Chal-i-Nimrod, between Samarra and Baghdad, and supposed to indicate the site of the Median Wall of Xenophon.

[2] Strabo, XVI. i. 15.

[3] Idem, 15.

apertures, the greatest of which also burns in the day-time. The plain of Babylon throws up flame from a place like a fish-pond, an acre in extent.' [1]

According to Eratosthenes, navigation from the West by way of the Red Sea, 'in the direction of the south and east', had reached as far as the Cinnamon country: 'beyond this district no one to this time, it is said, had penetrated'.

Polybius, half a century later than Eratosthenes (204–122 B.C.), makes incidental mention of Gerra, still, in his time, the principal commercial centre of the adjacent part of Arabia—a point in the great caravan route from the spice regions beyond, from which tracks branched off to Mecca, Medina, and Petra. Gerra was in close connexion with other harbours of the Persian Gulf, and also maintained extensive trade relations with the Greeks of Seleucia, a city then recently founded on the right bank of the Tigris opposite Ctesiphon. King Antiochus III, who went with a fleet from the Tigris, along the Arabian coast, about 205 B.C., appears to have had the intention of reducing the town of Gerra and the neighbouring tribes, but was ultimately content to leave them in enjoyment of their liberty: a concession, however, which had to be purchased by magnificent presents. A view of the sterile country seems to have been enough to make him abandon the idea of a permanent occupation. When, therefore, a letter from the Gerraean chief was brought to him, which, being interpreted, ran: 'Destroy not, O King, those two things which have been given us of the gods—perpetual peace and freedom',[2] he contented himself with receiving a large tribute, part in silver and part in precious gems, and sailed away, first towards the island of Tylos and then back again to Seleucia (205–204 B.C.).[3]

Agatharchides, who wrote in the second century B.C., speaks of Gerra as having become the chief emporium on the east side of Arabia, so that its inhabitants were said to rival in opulence the Sabaeans, to whose country their caravans repaired.

Between Agatharchides and our next great authority, Strabo, we have the Greek writer Artemidorus of Ephesus (*c.* 100 B.C.), Posidonius, and the Roman Juba, the younger.[4] The first-named seems to have done little more than copy Agatharchides, while as to Posidonius, only fragments of his work are extant, but though his writings are among those most frequently referred to by

[1] Pliny, II. 109 and 110.
[2] Polyb. XIII. 9.
[3] Bevan, vol. ii, p. 24.
[4] King and writer, died *c.* A. D. 19.

Strabo, he gives little or no new information concerning our region.

The geographical work of Strabo (b. 63 B.C.), though most comprehensive, contains little that may be termed original as regards the Gulf region. He drew, as we have seen, mainly on writers who had preceded him, thus preserving much knowledge that would otherwise have been lost. India and Persia he never saw, and regarding these countries he draws upon Aristobulus and Nearchus. For Iran and Persia proper, he drew upon Herodotus, Xenophon, and Eratosthenes; for Assyria, Babylonia, and Mesopotamia, on Herodotus and on Alexander's historians, Eratosthenes and Posidonius; for Syria, Phoenicia, and the Persian and Arabian Gulfs, on all these and on Artemidorus, the contemporary of Agatharchides; for Arabia and the Indian and Red Seas, on Agatharchides, Aelius Gallus, and Artemidorus.

The terms in which Strabo speaks of the outflow of the Tigris and Euphrates into the Persian Gulf show clearly that each of these rivers, in his day, had its separate outlet to the sea. 'The Tigris', he says, 'is navigable upwards from its mouth to Opis,[1] and to the present Seleucia. Opis is a village and a mart for the surrounding places. The Euphrates also is navigable up to Babylon, a distance of more than 3,000 stadia.'

Strabo's description of the configuration of the Arabian shore was derived from Eratosthenes. He quotes Artemidorus, who derived his details from Agatharchides, regarding the wealth of the Sabaeans and Gerraeans, as follows:

'By the trade (in aromatics) both the Sabaeans and the Gerraei have become the richest of all the tribes, and possess a great quantity of wrought articles in gold and silver, as couches, tripods, basins, drinking vessels, to which we must add the costly magnificence of their houses; for the doors, walls and roofs are variegated with inlaid ivory, gold, silver and precious stones.'

Concerning maritime relations with Taprobane, Strabo had nothing to add to the information of Eratosthenes.

Little is now added to our knowledge of the Persian Gulf region until we reach the age of Pliny (A. D. 23–79). The geographical portion of his *Natural History* is, on the whole, the least satisfactory part of his work and compares unfavourably with the writings, of the same kind, of Eratosthenes and Strabo, consisting mostly of dry catalogues of names of cities, tribes, rivers, &c.

[1] As to the doubtful site of Opis, see Lane, among others.

He is, in places, careful with regard to lines of coasts, but his descriptions of interiors are often a mere jumble and confusion, and there is a great want of chronological discrimination in his use of authorities. In describing Arabia he relies mainly on Juba: his information must therefore be taken with caution.[1]

Pliny's account of the trade of the West with India, of the course pursued—which, in his days, seems to have been largely by way of the Red Sea—and of the ports frequented, is, however, of much interest. After giving a somewhat confused version of the voyage of Nearchus, he proceeds to say:

'Afterwards it was found the safest course to proceed direct from the promontory of Syagrus (Cape Fartak) in Arabia to Patale with the west wind (Favonius) which they call there Hippalus, a distance reckoned at 1,435 miles. In the next generation it was judged to be both a safer and nearer course to proceed from the same promontory direct to Sigerus, a port of India, and this mode of navigation was pursued for a long time, until merchants discovered a shorter route, and the profits of India were thus brought nearer to hand. The voyage is now made every year, with cohorts of archers on board the ships: on account of the pirates who infest these seas.

'It will be worth while to set forth their whole course from Egypt; accurate information concerning it being now for the first time available.... They begin the navigation in the middle of summer, before the rising of the dog star, or immediately after its appearance, and arrive in about 30 days at Ocelis in Arabia or Kane in the frankincense-bearing region. There is also a third port called Muza, which is not frequented by those sailing to India, but by the merchants who trade in frankincense and other Arabian perfumes.... From thence (Ocelis or Kane) they sail with the wind called Hippalus in forty days to the first commercial station (emporium) of India, named Muziris, which is not much to be recommended.... There is another more advantageous port, which is named Barake, in the territory of a nation called the Neacyndi.... They commence the return voyage from India at the beginning of the Egyptian month of Tybis, which answers to our December (or thereabouts). Thus it comes to pass that they return home within the year. They make the return voyage from India with the south-east wind (Vulturnus), and when they have entered the Red Sea, with the south-west or south wind.'[2]

This account of Pliny's seems to indicate that direct maritime communication between East and West had by now become firmly established, and that voyages, moreover, were by no means confined to journeys along the coast. Mariners, emboldened by experience, had taken to navigating their vessels in the open ocean. A further point of interest is his mention of pirates, who

[1] Bunbury. [2] VI. 26.

figure conspicuously in the subsequent history of the Persian Gulf.

Pliny is the first writer to give a detailed account of Charax, the exact site of which has never been precisely identified,[1] though a site at the northern end of Abadan Island has been indicated. He says:

'Charax is a city situate at the furthest extremity of the Arabian (i. e. Persian) Gulf, at which begins the more prominent portion of Arabia Felix (Eudaemon): it is built on an artificial elevation, having the Tigris on the right, and the Eulaeus on the left, and lies on a piece of ground three miles in extent, just between the confluence of those streams. It was first founded by Alexander the Great. By his order it was to be called Alexandria . . . the city, however, was destroyed by inundations of the rivers. Antiochus afterwards rebuilt the place and called it by his own name, and on its being again destroyed, Pasines, king of the neighbouring Arabians, restored it, and raised embankments for its protection, calling it after himself. These embankments extended in length a distance of nearly three miles, in breadth a little less. It stood at first a distance of ten stadia from the shore, and even had a harbour of its own. But according to Juba, it is fifty miles from the sea; and at the present day, the ambassadors from Arabia, and our own merchants who have visited the place, say that it stands at a distance of one hundred and twenty miles from the sea-shore. Indeed, in no part of the world have alluvial deposits been formed more rapidly by the rivers, and to a greater extent than here; and it is only a matter of surprise that the tides, which run to a considerable distance beyond this city, do not carry them back again.'

Here we have a most interesting reference to the gradual recession of the sea at the Tigris-Euphrates delta. Of the lower courses of these rivers Pliny writes in considerable detail:

'From Nearchus and Onesicritus we learn that the distance by water from the Persian Sea to Babylon, up the Euphrates, is four hundred and twelve miles. . . . Some writers state that the Euphrates continues to flow with an undivided channel for a distance of eighty-seven miles beyond Babylon, before its waters are diverted from their channel for the purposes of irrigation. . . . When the Euphrates ceases, by running in its channel, to afford protection to those who dwell on its banks, which it does when it approaches the confines of Charax, the country is immediately infested by the Attali, a predatory people of Arabia, beyond whom are found the Scenitae.[2] The banks along this river are occupied by the nomads of Arabia, as far as the deserts of Syria.'

After giving a detailed description of the upper course of the

[1] See foot-note, p. 30.

[2] 'Dwellers in Tents', or Beduin.

Tigris, our author speaks of the river dividing into two channels, and says that,

'When the waters have re-united, the river assumes the name of Pasitigris. After this it receives the Choaspes[1] which comes from Media; and then, as we have already stated, flowing between Seleucia and Ctesiphon, discharges itself into the Chaldean Lakes, which it supplies for a distance of seventy miles. Escaping from them by a vast channel, it passes the city of Charax to the right, and empties itself into the Persian Sea, being ten miles in width at the mouth. Between the mouths of the two rivers Tigris and the Euphrates, the distance was formerly twenty-five, or, according to some writers, seven miles only, both of them being navigable to the sea. But the Orcheni and others who dwell on its banks, have long since dammed up the waters of the Euphrates for the purposes of irrigation, and it can only discharge itself into the sea by the aid of the Tigris.

'The country on the banks of the Tigris is called Parapotamia; we have already made mention of Mesene, one of its districts.'

To certain of the regions and places on the Persian side of the Gulf, Pliny devotes considerable space. Of Elymais (Elam) he says:

'Below the Eulaeus is Elymais upon the coast adjoining to Persis, and extending from the river Orates (Tab River) to Charax, a distance of two hundred and forty miles. . . . The shore which lies in the front of this district is rendered inaccessible by mud, the rivers Brixa and Ortacea bringing down vast quantities of slime from the interior. . . . Elymais itself being so marshy that it is impossible to reach Persia that way, unless by going completely round; it is also freely infested with serpents, which are brought down by the waters of these rivers. The part of it which is most inaccessible of all, bears the name of Characene, from Charax, the frontier city of the kingdom of Arabia.'

Of Persis and the Persian Gulf itself he says:

'The Persae have always inhabited the shores of the Red Sea, for which reason it has received the name of the Persian Gulf. This maritime region of Persis has the name of Ciribo; on the side of which it runs up to that of the Medi, there is a place known by the name of Climax Megale (Great Ladder), where the mountains are ascended by a steep flight of stairs,[2] and so afford a narrow passage which leads to Persepolis, the former capital of the kingdom, destroyed by Alexander.'

Among all the classical geographers Pliny gives us the most detailed description extant of a great part of the Arabian shore of the Persian Gulf at that period. He says:

'We will now proceed to describe the coast after leaving Charax which

[1] The reference is obviously to the Diyala.

[2] An appropriate reference to the extremely difficult approaches to the interior of Persia, from the coast in the neighbourhood of Bushire.

was first explored by order of King Antiochus Epiphanes.[1] We come first to the place where the mouth of the Euphrates first existed, the river Salsus (Khor Bubiyan) and the Promontory of Chaldone from which spot, the sea along the coast, for an extent of fifty miles bears more the aspect of a series of whirlpools than of ordinary sea; the river Archenus and then a desert tract for a space of one hundred miles, until we come to the island of Ichara;[2] the gulf of Capeus, on the shores of which dwell the Gaulopes and the Chateni, and then the gulf of Gerrha. Here we find the city of Gerrha five miles in circumference, with towers built of square blocks of salt. Fifty miles from the coast, lying in the interior, is the region of Attene, and opposite to Gerrha is the island of Tylos, as many miles distant from the shore; it is famous for the vast numbers of its pearls, and has a town of the same name; in its vicinity is a smaller island, distant from a promontory on the larger one twelve miles and a half. They say that beyond this, large islands may be seen, upon which no one has ever landed. . . . We then come to the island of Asclie . . . and then the river Cynos. Beyond this, the navigation is impracticable on that side,[3] according to Juba, on account of the rocks; and he has omitted all mention of Batrasave[4] a town of the Omani, and of the city of Omana, which former writers have made out to be a famous port of Carmania.'

Then follows a long enumeration of unidentified, if not also unidentifiable, places and islands, which it would serve no good purpose here to set out. Pliny's description, though vague, is, however, of value as marking a distinct stage in our geographical knowledge of the regions under consideration.

During the time of the later Ptolemies and the period of Roman power, the Persian Gulf line of communication and trade seems to have fallen largely into desuetude, or at least to have held subsidiary rank, and was replaced by that of the 'Arabian Gulf', i. e. the Red Sea. From accounts furnished by Pliny (and others), both regarding his own age and the times preceding it, we know that a very large trade was carried on with India through the Arabian Gulf: this was at the time when Egypt was a Roman

[1] Arrian mentions incidentally that the first attempts to sail round the Arabian Chersonese were made from the Red Sea in the hope of reaching the Persian and Susian shores, but says that the expedition, after having coasted along the greater part of Arabia was compelled by want of water to sail back again. The next attempts at the exploration of the eastern coast of Arabia were due to the ambition of Alexander, but the information acquired by his officers was in great part lost at his death and these shores remained almost entirely unknown to Europeans, until, as we learn from Pliny a century and a half later, an exploration was made by order of King Antiochus Epiphanes (176–164 B. C.).

[2] Or Icarus, thought by some geographical commentators to refer to Kharag Island.

[3] The Arabian side of the Persian Gulf.

[4] Considered to be close to Musandam.

Arizona State Museum

province, and navigation, we are informed, took such enormous strides that not only single vessels but whole fleets set sail to different ports of India. The Persian Gulf experienced some revival of importance during the rule of the Sasanians, but only came fully into its own as the main channel of trade at the rise of the Moslem Empire in the seventh century, when 'the whirlwind of activity let loose by Muhammad welded the Eastern world as no force had yet done, and brought the West for another millennium to its feet'.

The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, written somewhere about A. D. 80,[1] contains the best account of the commerce carried on from the Red Sea and the coast of Africa to the East Indies, &c., in the pre-Muhammadan period, when Egypt was a province of the Roman Empire, i. e. from *c.* 30 B. C. Of the Persian Gulf, the Periplus gives comparatively few particulars, but what is said is worth quoting in full as showing the ports and the nature of the trade which was carried on at the time. It says:

'If sailing onward you wind round with the adjacent coast to the north, then as you approach the entrance of the Persian Gulf you fall in with a group of islands which lie in a range along the coast of 2,000 stadia, and are called the islands of Kalaiou.[2] The inhabitants of the adjacent coast are cruel and treacherous, and see imperfectly in the day-time.

'Near the last headland of the islands of Kalaiou is the mountain called Kalon[3] (Pulcher), to which succeeds, at no great distance, the mouth of the Persian Gulf, where there are many pearl fisheries. On the left of the entrance, towering to a vast height, are the mountains which bear the name of Asaboi,[4] and directly opposite on the right you see another, high and round, called the hill of Semiramis. The strait which separates them has a width of 600 stadia,[5] and through this opening the Persian Gulf pours its

[1] By a Greek mariner of Berenike, a seaport of the Egyptian coast of the Red Sea, whence he made commercial voyages as far as the seaports of East Africa and to the western shores of India and beyond. The name of the author is unknown: it has been wrongly ascribed to Arrian. Having himself made careful observations of the navigation of these seas, the author, whoever he was, committed them to writing, for the benefit of other mariners.

[2] Or Kalaiu, probably referring to Daymaniya Islands lying in lat. 23° 42′ N. and long. 57° 55′ E.

[3] The range of Jabal Akhdhar.

[4] Musandam: the *Asabon Akron* of Ptolemy. The mountains of the Asabi, or Beni Asab, whom Wellstead (2) described as still living there: a people very different from the other tribes of Oman, living in seclusion in their mountains.

[5] About 75 miles: the actual width is about 40 miles. Pliny gives only 5 miles (VI. 28).

vast expanse of waters far up into the interior. At the very head of this gulf there is a regular mart of commerce, called the city of Apologos,[1] situate near Pasinou-Kharax[2] and the river Euphrates.

'If you coast along the mouth of the gulf you are conducted by a six days' voyage to another seat of trade belonging to Persis, called Omana. Barugaza maintains a regular commercial intercourse with both these Persian ports, dispatching thither large vessels freighted with copper, sandalwood, beams for rafters, horn, and logs of *sasamina* and ebony. Omana imports also frankincense from Kane, while it exports to Arabia a particular species of vessels called *madara*, which have their planks sewn together. But both from Apologos and Omana there are exported to Barugaza and to Arabia great quantities of pearls, of mean quality, however, compared with Indian sort, together with purple, cloth for the natives, wine, dates in great quantity, and gold and slaves.

'After leaving the district of Omana the country of the Parsidai succeeds, which belongs to another government, and the bay which bears the name of Terabdoi (Gedrosia), from the midst of which a cape projects.'

The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea has additional interest, inasmuch as it records the inauguration of *direct* voyages across the Indian Ocean, as distinct from the earlier practice of creeping along in sight of the coast, by the discovery (attributed to Hippalus)[3] of the periodicity of the winds that blow in these seas.

Quintus Curtius, the Roman historian of Alexander the Great, the date of whose writings is not known with certainty,[4] gives a short but so delightfully accurate a description of the Pasitigris or Eulaeus (Karun River) that it may be quoted in full.

'Its source', he says, 'is in the ridges of the Uxians; through a thousand stadia, between wooded banks, it rushes headlong down a rocky channel. Received on the plains, it assumes a calmer tenor; thence a navigable stream, after gliding six hundred stadia over a bed singularly level, it blends its waters with the Persian Sea.'

His picture of the configuration of the land on the Persian side of the Gulf is equally appropriate.

'It (Persia) is shut in on one side, by continuous ridges of mountains, extending in length sixteen hundred stadia, and in breadth one hundred and twenty. This chain, derived from the Caucasus, runs on to the Erythraean

[1] 'This place does not appear to be referred to in any of the other classical works, but it is frequently mentioned by Arabian writers under the name of Ubulla. As an emporium it took the place of Teredon or Diridotis (see pp. 33 and 41), just as Basra, under the second Caliphate, took the place of Ubulla itself' (McCrindle).

[2] See note, p. 30. The modern Mohammerah (Schoff).

[3] About A. D. 45 (Schoff).

[4] Some critics place him as early as the time of Vespasian, A. D. 70–9.

Sea; and where the mountains terminate, the Gulf presents another breastwork. At the base of the hills lies the level country, a fertilized expanse, adorned with multiplied villages and cities. Through the plains, the river Arosis carries the water of many brooks to the Medus: the Medus, diverted (by dams and canals for irrigation) from the Sea and towards the South, flows on, a less river than that which it receives. No stream more promotes vegetation. . . . There is not, in all Asia, a more salubrious climate; on the one side the refrigerating shade of the ridges alleviates the heat and attempers the air; on the other, the adjoining sea cherishes the earth with moderate warmth.'[1]

In A. D. 116 or thereabouts, the Romans reached the Persian Gulf.

'Trajan', says Gibbon,[2] 'was ambitious of fame; and as long as mankind shall continue to bestow more liberal applause on their destroyers than on their benefactors, the thirst of military glory will ever be the vice of the most exalted characters. The praises of Alexander, transmitted by a succession of poets and historians, had kindled a dangerous emulation in the mind of Trajan. Like him, the Roman emperor undertook an expedition against the nations of the East; but he lamented with a sigh, that his advanced age scarcely left him any hopes of equalling the renown of the son of Philip. Yet the success of Trajan, however transient, was rapid and specious. The degenerate Parthians, broken by intestine discord, fled before his arms. He descended the river Tigris in triumph, from the mountains of Armenia to the Persian Gulf. He enjoyed the honour of being the first, as he was the last, of the Roman generals who ever navigated that remote sea. His fleets ravaged the coasts of Arabia; and Trajan vainly flattered himself that he was approaching the confines of India. . . . But the death of Trajan soon clouded the splendid prospect.'

Ptolemy, who flourished in the middle of the second century of our era, the last of the great original classical contributors to geography, more an astronomer than a geographer, adds very little to our knowledge of the political and geographical conditions of the Persian Gulf region in his time. Of the immediate neighbourhood of the Gulf, and especially of the Arabian coast —though he furnishes the names of many towns, villages, and tribes, most of which, if they ever existed, have long since disappeared—he gives only the most general description. But it is clear from his writings, as also from the Periplus, that the Greek mariners had by this time carried their commercial enterprises far beyond the limits which were known in the previous century.

[1] *The History of Alexander the Great*, Book V, chap. iv.
[2] *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. i, chap. i.

At this point we close a somewhat disconnected story of conditions in the Persian Gulf, as given by the various classical writers who touch upon the subject. From the time of Ptolemy our knowledge of the Gulf region is obscured by a veil which is scarcely lifted until the early centuries of Islam, when the Moslem historians and geographers throw a flood of light upon the scene. Though there were a few writers, the intervening period was one mainly of uninspired compilations or abridgements of previous works, which contribute little to our geographical or historical knowledge. Certain events, however, emerge which enlighten us upon Persian Gulf affairs. On the Persian side, the period was marked by the struggles of the kings of the Sasanian dynasty with Rome, extending from the third to the sixth century. On the Arabian side, we note the gradually increasing participation of the Arab in maritime activity, to which great impetus had been given by the discovery of the monsoon or trade-wind, known as 'Hippalus'.

The reign of Shapur II (A. D. 309–37) was marked by frequent raids made upon the Persian coast by the Arabs of Hajar, which then included Hasa, Qatif, and Bahrain. Almost for the first time since the expedition of Sennacherib, we read of a naval expedition against these raiders in the Persian Gulf, commanded by the king himself, which was completely successful.

V

THE MIDDLE AGES

IRAQ, KHUZISTAN, FARS, KIRMAN, MAKRAN

Pour bien sçavoir les choses il faut en sçavoir le détail.—*La Rochefoucauld.*

FOR information regarding the conditions, social and commercial, in the Gulf during medieval times, we turn principally to the Moslem historians and geographers, particularly the latter. Of these writers there is a fairly continuous line stretching over a long period, from Baladhuri, Yaqubi, and Tabari, who all wrote in the ninth century A. D., to Abul Ghazi and Sadiq Isfahani in the seventeenth.[1] It was under the Caliph Mansur (8th–9th century A. D.) that Arabic geography was inaugurated, to be brought to a high state of maturity under Harun ar Rashid's successor, Al Mamun (9th–10th century), when original and quasi-original works were written on the lines of Hellenic models.

Few people pushed the taste for making long travels as far as the Arabs, who had many motives for leaving their country and travelling among strange nations. It was reserved to Islam at once to develop the passion for travel among its devotees, and to facilitate the means of satisfying the desire. The pilgrimage to Mecca, incumbent upon every good Moslem, set in motion caravans which every year left Syria, Persia, and the extremities of Moslem Africa to visit the country of the Prophet and the place of his burial. Coupled with this was the spur of interest and profit, since the pilgrimages afforded votaries advantageous opportunities for exchanging the products of their respective countries. The sobriety and frugal temperament of the Arab race considerably diminished the cost and embarrassments of long travel; whilst the Oriental tradition of hospitality contributed to the same result; the charity of rich pilgrims and the endowments of pious foundations came to the aid of the poorest. Moreover, the Islamic dogma of fatalism, or predestination, helped them to

[1] 'C'est dans les voyageurs arabes, bien plutôt que dans les historiens, d'ordinaire si secs, si décharnés, si exclusivement bornés à des récits de batailles, de révolutions de palais et à des notices nécrologiques sur de grands fonctionnaires et des littérateurs; c'est dans les premiers, disons-nous, qu'il faut chercher la connaissance intime de la société musulmane, de ses usages et de ses superstitions' (Ibn Batuta (2), translators' preface).

discount in advance the risks and privations which they might have to endure. For the enlightened class, other motives served as incentives to travel: students of theology and jurisprudence sought to meet—often far from their native land—professors versed in these sciences; or individuals spurred by religious fervour went to seek the example and precepts of some pious leader. Finally, a praiseworthy desire to study foreign manners and customs drew travellers, more than once, even as far as the Indies and China; and the wide diffusion of the Arabic language came also to the aid of explorers of the last category.[1]

From our point of view, we may regard Cosmas, the Indian navigator, who flourished in the reign of Justinian (*c.* A. D. 535), as the forerunner of the Moslem writers, for he fills a gap in the history of the Persian Gulf between the latter and the classical writers. He tells us that among the traders engaged in the commercial interchange between the Persian Gulf and China—the meeting-ground for which, in his day, was the island of Ceylon—were Arabs, Persians, and Ethiopians. Persians, Cosmas says, were so numerous in Ceylon that 'on that land is established the Church of Christ of the Sect of the Persians, and there is a presbyter sent from Persia, and a deacon, and the whole service of the church. But the natives, and the Kings, are of other faiths.'

By the time of Cosmas, however, the lustre of the Roman name, which during some centuries had held first place in the Eastern Seas, began to pale. Procopius, who wrote a little later than Cosmas, said that in his time the Persians had become the masters of the markets of the East, and the stream of traffic began once more to flow through the Persian Gulf. It may be inferred from Cosmas that the Gulf sailor had not as yet pushed his conquest of the sea as far as the extreme East, nor had the Chinaman appeared on the shores of the Persian or the Arabian Gulf: Arab and Persian and Chinaman met on common ground half-way. It was probably not until the end of the tenth century that Chinese junks came to the ports of Arabia and Persia, and Arab and Persian vessels repaired to the coasts of the Celestial Empire. We first receive a hint of this fact from the accounts of voyages made by one Sulaiman the Merchant,[2] who was established on

[1] Op. cit.

[2] This description was written and edited according to stories told by Sulaiman and put into writing A. H. 237 (A. D. 851); the author of the original work is unknown. The accounts are corroborated in a second part by a certain Abu Zaid Hasan, of Siraf (tenth century), who lived in Sulaiman's time, and had personal

the coast of the Persian Gulf, probably at Basra, and who made several voyages to China during the period of direct communication by sea between the Arab Empire and China, when Chinese trade had reached the zenith of its activity, viz. in the middle of the ninth century.

From the accounts of Sulaiman we learn that at this time maritime voyages from the Persian Gulf to India and China were made, in normal circumstances, by a great number of traders who went frequently to these countries from Iraq. The port of departure was Siraf,[1] which had risen into importance as the chief emporium of the Gulf. We learn that:

'As for the place whence Ships depart, and those also they touch at; many Persons declare that the Navigation is performed in the following order. Most of the Chinese Ships take in their Cargo at Siraf, where also they Ship their Goods which come from Basra, Oman, and other Parts; and this they do because in this sea, (that is in the Sea of Persia and the Red Sea) there are frequent storms, and shoal Water, in many Places—they there water also; and from thence make Sail for a Place called Mascat, which is in the extremity of the Province of Oman, about 200 Leagues from Siraf.'[2]

Chinese copper money, Abu Zaid Hasan says, was current at Siraf. Ships of Siraf also made voyages to the Red Sea; but did not go beyond Jidda.

Masudi, who was contemporary with Abu Zaid, corroborates the latter's information and that of Sulaiman, and widens the horizon of our knowledge regarding the range of the trade and products of the Eastern Seas, to which he gives the name of 'Abyssinian Sea'.

'On this sea,' he says, 'extending from China along India, Faris, Oman, El Basra, El Bahrain, Yemen, Abyssinia, El Hejaz, El Kulzum, Ez Zanj, Es Sind and the islands which it surrounds, are so many and various nations, that their description and number is known only to the Almighty. . . . There are many places in this sea where they dive for pearls. On these coasts, cornelians, *madinj* (which is a sort of coral), and different sorts of rubies, sapphires, diamonds, and turquois are found . . . on the coast of this sea are mines of iron, in the countries about Kirman. Oman produces

relations with him. Abu Zaid states that he never went to India or China himself, and declares that his only aim was to modify and complete the description of Sulaiman, according to what he had gathered in reading, or obtained from the mouths of persons who had been over the Eastern Seas. See also Ferrand, G.; Reinaud, M. (1); and Renaudot, E. (1) (2).

[1] The site of this city is marked by the present-day Tahiri. [2] Renaudot, E.

copper. From the countries which form the coast of this sea, come different sorts of perfumes, scents, ambergris, various drugs used in medicine, plantane, cinnamon, cinnabar and ruscus.'

The sailors of Oman, which Masudi says were Arabs of the Azd tribe, went as far south as Qanbalu (Madagascar), inhabited even in his day by Moslems, and the merchants of Siraf were also in the habit of sailing thither.

It is interesting to observe that even at this early stage in the history of navigation, some attempt was made at lighting in the Persian Gulf and other provision made for the guidance of the mariner. Masudi says:

'There are marks of wood erected for the sailors in the sea, at Hezara, on the side of Ubulla, and Abadan, which look like three seats in the middle of the water, and upon which fires are burnt by night, to caution the vessels which come from Oman, Siraf, and other ports, lest they run against the Hezara; for if they run there, they are wrecked and lost.' [1]

Idrisi, the Spanish-Arabian geographer, writing later of these erections, says:

'The *khashabat* are situated exactly at the place where the Dijla discharges its waters into the sea of Fars. They are pile-work, on which stand huts or cabins occupied by coast-guards with boats which enable them to get to these cabins or go ashore.'

Nasir-i-Khusraw,[2] the Persian writer (*c.* A. D. 1047), in his *Safar Namah*, also refers to these constructions, and adds that

'they are erected for a double purpose: firstly, for lighting during the night, by means of lights enclosed in glass to protect them from the wind, to warn vessels to take precautions in these dangerous waters; and secondly, to show the navigator his position, and to warn him against possible pirates.'

In those days the construction of ships appears to have been a craft in which natives of Oman excelled. Abu Zaid gives an interesting description to this effect:

'There are people, at Oman, who cross over to the Islands that produce the Coco-nut, carrying with them Carpenter's and such-like Tools; and having felled as much wood as they want, they let it dry, then strip off the Leaves, and with the Bark of the Tree they spin a Yarn, wherewith they sew the Planks together, and so build a Ship. Of the same wood they cut and round away a Mast; of the Leaves they weave their Sails, and the Bark they make into Cordage. Having thus completed their Vessel, they load her with Coco-nuts, which they bring and sell at Oman. Thus it is

[1] Masudi (2), p. 259.

[2] For an account of this entertaining writer, see Browne, E. G.

that, from this Tree alone, so many Articles are convertible to use, as suffice not only to build and rig out a vessel, but to load her when she is completed, and in a Trim to sail.'

Our survey would not be complete without brief reference to the series of narratives we know by the name of *Sindbad the Sailor*. The accounts of these seven famous voyages are obviously based on records such as those quoted above: in the story of Sindbad we have a true history, in a romantic setting, of Moslem travels in the ninth and tenth centuries. In the guise of fable may be recognized everywhere an account of places known and visited at the present day.

At this point, for the sake of clearness, we may briefly refer to the events which led up to Moslem domination of the regions surrounding the Gulf.

At the time of the advent of Muhammad the Prophet,[1] in the early part of the seventh century, Persia and Mesopotamia formed the kingdom of the Sasanian ruler Khosroes; the districts on the Arabian littoral of the Gulf—Bahrain, Oman, and indeed Mahra and Hadhramaut—were also under Persian domination. This kingdom of the Sasanians the Arab eventually completely overran and conquered: the last of the Sasanians was hunted down and slain in the year A. D. 652, and the whole of Iran passed under the rule of Islam in the time of the Caliph Othman, the second of the immediate successors of Muhammad, whose reign came to an end in 656. The maritime provinces of the Persian kingdom were Iraq, Khuzistan, Fars, Kirman, and Makran, and the names and boundaries of these divisions were maintained for the most part, as far as is known, under the Arabs.[2]

A detailed narrative of the successive stages of the Moslem conquest of Persia is not the special concern of this work and may be found set forth elsewhere;[3] but, for clearness, the early steps may well be summarized. After the death of the Prophet and on the succession of the Caliph Abu Bekr, his general, Khalid, launched an attack upon the outlying western province of Persia. Marching north-eastward, not far from the shores of

[1] Muhammad was born in the year A. D. 570 and assumed office as the Founder of Islam A. D. 613–14. The Year of the Flight from Mecca to Medina was A. D. 622, and marks the commencement of the Muhammadan Era (A. H.).

[2] Le Strange (2).

[3] See Sykes (6), Hogarth (6), Malcolm (1) and (3), &c.

the Persian Gulf, he defeated Hormuz, the governor of the province, in an action known as the 'Battle of the Chains', fought near Ubulla.[1] He then turned northward up the Euphrates, captured Hira, and, pushing still farther northward, gained a decisive victory over the enemy in A. D. 634. At the orders of the Caliph he handed over the command of the Persian campaign to Muthanna, who, after receiving reinforcements, turned eastward towards Babylon to be defeated at the 'Battle of the Bridges', whereupon he fell back on Allis. Receiving fresh troops from Medina from Omar, now Caliph, to which were added recruits from among the friendly tribes in the vicinity, Muthanna took the field once more and gained the victory of Buaib, but died soon after of the wounds he received in the Battle of the Bridges.

In A. D. 635 an embassy dispatched by Omar to the Persian monarch Yezdijird, summoning him to embrace Islam, was received with contempt; and on the capture of Damascus by the Moslem army operating in Syria, the main Arab army was reorganized for the Persian War and placed under the command of Sad. The outcome of the campaign was as follows:

In A. D. 636 the Persians were defeated in the decisive battle of Qadisiya on the western bank of the Euphrates.

In 637 followed the capture of Ubulla, and the annexation of Iraq soon followed.

In 640 the conquest of Khuzistan was achieved, to be followed by that of Fars and, in due course, the complete absorption of Persia into the Moslem Empire.

During the Omayyad Caliphate, which held sway at Damascus for nearly 100 years, from the middle of the seventh century, Persia remained a province of the Caliphate. On the overthrow of the Omayyads by their rivals the Abbasids in A. D. 749, the seat of the Caliphate was removed from Syria to Mesopotamia and the city of Baghdad was founded on the Tigris.

History, as far as this work is concerned, now resolves itself mainly into description of the seats of population and movement on or near the Persian Gulf shores—such centres as Basra, Siraf, Qais Island, Hormuz, &c., together with places in the interior with which their history may be found to be intimately associated. It will be well, however, before proceeding, to note what were the

[1] Probably near the modern Abul Khasib, which may well derive its name thus.

chief epochs of Persian history during the period under consideration; these are set out below.[1]

The Moslem war was prosecuted with admirable boldness, and the conquest of Syria and Iraq was complete within twenty-five years of the death of the Prophet. The Arab generals, realizing the necessity of strengthening their long base of operations, which extended for about 400 miles, with the camps of Basra and Kufa on its eastern and western termini, established permanent outposts and laid the foundation of the towns of Kufa and Basra. They had also built, south-west of ancient Babylon but at some little distance from the river, the city of Hira, once the chief town of Iraq, and Arab writers inform us that in the fifth and sixth centuries this city constantly saw vessels, which had come from India and China, moored before its houses. There seems some doubt as to the accuracy of the statement that Chinese vessels were here seen as early as this; but, in any event, the city overflowed with riches and the country round presented the most animated appearance.

For a long period prior to the creation of Basra, Ubulla (under the name of Apologos) had held pride of place as the chief outlet on the Gulf for Persian trade; it stood at the point where the great highways from Iran and Arabia approached on either bank of the Tigris, and served as the port of call for ships ascending and descending the river. The Moslem geographers furnish us with many interesting details regarding its early history and activities: the first of these writers to mention Ubulla, Ibn Khurdadhbih, draws attention to the important place it held in the through traffic between West and East. 'Sometimes', he says, 'the Jewish merchants, embarking from the Frank Country (France), on the western sea, direct their course towards Antioch (at the mouth of the Orontes). Thence they go overland to Al Jabia, where they arrive after a three days' march. Here they

[1] Early 7th cent. Overthrow of the Persian Empire by the Arabs.
632–61. The first four Caliphs.
661. The Omayyad Caliphate of Damascus.
749. The Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad.
932–1055. The Buyid (Daylamite) Dynasty.
11th cent. The founding of the Seljuk Dynasty.
13th cent. The Mongol Invasion. Extinction of the Abbasid Caliphate. The Ilkhans.
14th cent. Tamerlane and the foundation of the Timurid Dynasty.
15th cent. The rise of the Safavi Dynasty (Ismail, Tahmasp, Abbas the Great).
16th cent. (*c.* 1514). Coming of the Portuguese.

take boat on the Euphrates for Baghdad, whence they go down the Tigris to Ubulla, and from Ubulla they sail successively for Oman, Sind, India, and China.'

The foundation of Ubulla dated from Sasanian (*c.* A. D. 220) or perhaps even earlier times, and it lay on the western shore of the estuary of the Tigris (i. e. the Blind Tigris or Dijla). It stood at the outlet into the Tigris of a canal of the same name, on a tract of land known as the Great Island, formed by this and the Maqil canal and the Tigris. Such a canal connecting the present Abul Khasib creek with the old Euphrates bed near Zubair is still clearly visible from the air and serves to identify Ubulla, as its name suggests, with this channel. Over against the town, on the east side of the estuary, was the station whence those who crossed the Tigris took the road to Khuzistan. At the time of the Moslem invasion it was, so Tabari tells us, ' a frontier place of Persia on the side of Arabia '. In A. D. 620 Abu Bekr's general, Khalid, with 20,000 men under his orders, was ordered to march on Ubulla, then under the command of a Persian named Hormuz, to whom Khalid sent a letter commanding him to ' embrace Islam, or pay tribute to me, or prepare for war '. The order not being obeyed, Ubulla fell to the Moslems, who ' gathered such a quantity of booty as had never before been seen ', including the tiara of Hormuz, valued at 10,000 dirhems, which was sent to Medina. The combat is known in history as the ' Battle of the Chains ', because Hormuz had prepared fetters wherewith to bind his prospective prisoners.

The Moslems do not appear to have harmed the city, for it continues to figure, in association with Basra, in the maritime activities of the Persian Gulf for some centuries. In the tenth century it is described as of considerable size.[1] Nasir-i-Khusraw, who visited the town *c.* A. D. 1051, and therefore speaks as an eye-witness, says: ' It appears to me to be a flourishing town, having palaces, bazaars, mosques and caravanserais in such numbers that it is impossible to count and describe them. The town proper stands on the northern bank of the canal; while on the southern bank are also found quarters, mosques, caravanserais, bazaars and vast edifices of such sort that nowhere in the world is there a more agreeable spot. This latter part of the town is known as Shiqq Othman.'

A hundred years later we are told that though it had shrunk in size the town was still adorned by large and beautiful edifices

[1] Muqaddasi.

surrounded by gardens, and well peopled and flourishing in every respect.[1] But by the fourteenth century, Ubulla had fallen from its high estate, and though 'formerly a large town, frequented by traffickers of India and Persia, it has been destroyed and is now no more than a *burg* or village where may still be seen the vestiges of castles which show its ancient splendour '.[2] The town had declined as the later city of Basra prospered, its extinction, or, more correctly, its absorption or gradual replacement by Basra, being doubtless largely due to its feverish situation on the estuary: Basra, equally convenient of approach, occupied a much more healthy site farther inland.

Few towns have figured more in the Gulf history than Basra, by which name here is meant Old Basra, which occupied a site on the right bank of the old Euphrates channel a mile or two east of modern Zubair, and must not be confused with the site of the Basra of to-day. Following the conquest of the Sasanian Empire, the Arabs required cities for their own people and also to serve as standing camps; three such were before long founded, viz. Kufa, Basra, and Wasit, all of which grew to be the chief towns of the Moslem province.

Even in antiquity there were important towns in this district, where the Euphrates and the Tigris flow into the sea, and where the desert routes from Nejd and Syria meet the routes from the Iranian highlands, between the swampy district of Al Bataih and the coast of the Persian Gulf. The doubtful site of the town of Diridotis (Teredon), which flourished in the time of Alexander, is to be sought for somewhere in this locality. The occupation of the point of intersection of the important system of highways which, in particular, commanded the approach to Iraq from the sea was a military necessity to the Arab conquerors. So in place of a camp, pitched here as early as A. D. 635, Utba bin Ghazwan, at the orders of the Caliph Omar, founded the new town in A. D. 637 or 638, and its lands were divided among the Arab tribes who were in garrison there.

'In the time of the Caliph Omar,' says Tabari, 'Basra as a town did not yet exist. It was a strong place on the banks of the Tigris, a country covered with black (?) stones such as are called *basra* by the Arabs. So, after the battle of Qadisiya and the destruction of the Persian Army, Omar, fearing that the Persian king would ask help of the king of Oman and the king of Hindustan, and these would accord it, considered it prudent to cause the country round the mouths of the Tigris to be garrisoned by a corps of troops

[1] Idrisi. [2] Ibn Batuta (2).

and to construct a town peopled by Arabs, in order to prevent the Persians from bringing auxiliaries by this route. So he called Utba, son of Ghazwan, the Mazinite, who was lord of the Beni Mazin and had been a companion of the Prophet and spoke thus to him: "God has caused Islam to triumph at my hands and has broken the Persians. Now it is my wish to guard the route between Hindustan and Oman, so that succour shall not reach the Persians from this direction. You should therefore lead your troops there and build a town in which you and your Mussulman troops may find yourselves at ease."'

Basra lay on the very edge of the desert, but in sight of the rich irrigated lands and palm-groves of the Shatt al Arab: it was reached by two canals, the Maqil from the north-east, down which ships came from Baghdad, and the Ubulla, through which the seaward traffic passed south-east to the Persian Gulf. The city grew with astonishing rapidity, its houses extending westward in a semicircle to the border of the desert, where a single gate called the Bab al Badiya (Desert Gate) gave egress. The houses were built for the most part of kiln-burnt bricks. Muqaddasi, writing in the latter part of the tenth century, states that the city had three Friday Mosques, the finest, built with marble columns, standing in the market-place.[1] There were also three great market streets, the shops and warehouses equalling those of Baghdad in extent. The *mirbad* (kneeling-place for camels) was the famous quarter at the western gate, where the desert caravans halted, and was one of the busiest parts of the city. But even when Muqaddasi wrote, many quarters of the city had already gone to ruin. Among institutions, he mentioned a public library which existed during the tenth century, having been founded and endowed by a certain Ibn Sawwar. A stipend provided for the entertainment of students and for the copying of books.

No detailed air survey of this area has yet been made, but from the air can be seen, with great accuracy, the intricate system of canals and date-groves which stretched continuously on either side of the Tigris, from its junction with the Euphrates at Qurna to a point opposite modern Abadan, on the right bank, and to Failiya, on the left bank.

Basra, like Kufa, was favourable soil for civil wars, and during

[1] A single minaret rising from the ruins of the great mosque mentioned by Muqaddasi remains to testify to the greatness of former days, but from the air the lay-out of the town is clearly visible, as also is the great network of canals which, in the days of its prosperity, covered the whole area from old Basra to modern Ashar (from *ushr*—the place of those who take the tenth, i. e. the Custom House).

the many insurrections recorded in the history of the Abbasids the town suffered much. In A. D. 871, when the rebellion of the Zanj was at its height, their leader—who gave himself out as a descendant of the Caliph Ali—stormed Basra and burnt the greater part of it, including the Great Mosque. In A.D. 923 Basra was sacked, during seventeen days, by the Carmathian chief. But the place in time partly regained its former opulence,[1] though it passed through various vicissitudes during the Buyid and Seljuk periods.

Nasir-i-Khusraw, who visited the city in A. D. 1050, found the greater part of the town still populous but in ruins, a space of half a farsang, covered with ruins, separating the inhabited parts; but the walls and gates of the town were solid and in a good state of repair. Three markets were still held daily in three separate quarters of the town. Nasir gives an interesting glimpse of the manner in which business was carried on: 'those who have valuables or bills, deposit them with a money-changer or banker against a receipt; all purchases are then paid for by cheque. During all the time of his sojourn in the town, the merchant makes payment by cheque or bill on a bank.'

In A. D. 1123 the city wall, running half a league within the old enceinte, was rebuilt by the Qadhi Abd as Salam. But the Mongol invasion and the extinction of the power of the Abbasids under Hulagu Khan, in A. D. 1258, conduced to the further decay of Basra, for it appears that the neglect of the canal system during the period immediately succeeding resulted, naturally, in the gradual desertion of the town. Ibn Batuta, who visited the town about the middle of the fourteenth century, laments the decline not only of its economic prosperity but also of its intellectual culture. Still, he says: 'Basra is one of the principal cities of Iraq and famous in every country; it covers a vast extent of ground; and has admirable avenues, many gardens, and excellent fruits. . . . Nowhere in the world is there a town richer in palms.' He pays high tribute to the rectitude of its people: 'The inhabitants of Basra are endowed with a generous character; they are friendly towards strangers and give them their just due, so that no foreigner wearies of his stay among them'—a reputation which applies to the people of modern Basra not less to-day than when Ibn Batuta wrote. Mustawfi, writing in the same century, speaks of the Great Mosque, rebuilt by the Caliph Ali, as the largest in Islam, which had a minaret before which oaths were

[1] Le Strange (2).

taken, and which ' shook or remained still according as the oath sworn before it was true or false '.

In the centuries following, Basra shared the fate of Baghdad, and after the conquest of Baghdad and Iraq by Sulaiman I, in A. D. 1534, the town fell into the hands of the Turks. Early in the seventeenth century a powerful native, Afrasiyab, succeeded in founding a practically independent dynasty in Basra under whose protection, it is particularly worthy of note, the harbour was opened to European traffic—first to the Portuguese and then to the Dutch and English. Finally begins a long struggle between the Turks and Persians which ended in A. D. 1779 in favour of the former, and at this point we leave the details of its history to be traced in later chapters.

The sea-trade of Iraq during the halcyon years of the Abbasid Caliphate passed principally through Basra. River traffic between it and Baghdad flourished; but it must be remembered that the physical conditions in Iraq were entirely different from what they are now, by reason of the great changes which have come to pass in the courses of the Euphrates and Tigris. At the present day the Tigris is joined at a point about 250 miles in a direct line below Baghdad by the Euphrates, just above Basra, whence the combined rivers flow into the Persian Gulf by the Shatt al Arab. But in early Moslem times, and probably even as late as the sixteenth century, the main stream of the Tigris, about 100 miles below Baghdad, turned off south from what is its present-day course and flowed down the channel now known as the Shatt al Hai, past Wasit, below which place it spread out and became lost in the Great Swamp which extended down to the immediate vicinity of Basra, where the course of the river again became well marked as the Dijla al Awra, or Blind Tigris. By this waterway cargo-boats went down without difficulty from Baghdad to Basra.[1]

But the present main stream via Ali Gharbi, Amara, and Azair must have existed from very early times: witness the ruins connected by a raised causeway to the river at Filaifila, which are of Babylonian date: below Ali Gharbi it probably took a course some fifty miles west of and parallel to the present channel; such a bed, now dry, exists, and its course is marked by numerous dead towns and villages, whilst in the marshes east of Qalat Salih, half submerged, are not a few brick ruins and traces of canals, relics of an earlier régime of the Tigris.

[1] Le Strange (2), pp. 43–4.

This channel appears to have been followed by Tavernier[1] in March 1652. He writes:

'We observed that a little beyond Baghdad the river Tigris divides itself into two arms: the one which runs through the ancient Chaldaea, the other keeps its course towards the point of Mesopotamia; these two arms making a large Island, crossed by several small channels.

'When we came to the place where the Tigris divides itself, we beheld as it were the compass of a city that might formerly have been a large league in circuit. There are some of the walls yet standing, upon which six coaches may go abreast. They are made of burnt brick, every brick being ten foot square, and three thick. The chronicles of the country say that these were the ruins of the ancient Babylon. We followed that arm of the Tigris that runs along the coast of Chaldaea, for fear of falling into the hands of the Arabs, who were then at war with the Pasha of Babylon. . . . Now the towns we met with upon the shore were these—Amurat, where there stood a fort of brick baked in the sun; Mansouri, a great town, Magar, Gazer, and Gorno. At this last place Euphrates and Tigris meet together. . . .'

Old Basra's importance as a port may be inferred from the very frequent mention which the place receives throughout this work: with its suburb, Ubulla, it was for a long period the centre of Arab sea-trade, the ramifications of which, as we have seen, extended even to China; it was the chief emporium for various ores and minerals—antimony, cinnabar, saffron, litharge, and numerous other commodities. At a later period we find that Basra held a subsidiary place to Siraf in the long-sea trade. Many stuffs of raw silk were there manufactured, and its bazars were famous for the jewellers, who sold all manner of trinkets. The tales of the *Thousand and one Nights* are a reflection, romantic but not essentially unveracious, of the gay and many-sided life of the great city.

According to the earlier Arab writers, vessels from Basra reached open water at Abadan, which now lies more than twenty miles up the estuary: Muqaddasi in the tenth century describes it as having only the open sea beyond. Abadan was noted in those days for mat-weaving, and there were guard-houses round the town for the protection of the mouth of the estuary. Nasir-i-Khusraw (eleventh century) says that, in his day, the tide left a couple of leagues dry between Abadan and the sea, and refers to the lighthouses (Khashabat), previously described. Abadan was still a flourishing town in the thirteenth century, but in the fourteenth century, when Ibn Batuta passed through, it had sunk to the size of a small village

[1] Vol. II. ch. viii.

and was already three miles from the sea; Mustawfi, Batuta's contemporary, however, speaks of it as a considerable port, the revenues of which, 441,000 dinars, were paid to the Basra treasury.

East of Iraq lay the province of Khuzistan with a short stretch of coast on which, in medieval times, was found the port of Sulaimanan at the estuary of the Dujail, about which we know little, and farther east stood Basiyan (the modern Buzi), at a point where much of the water of the swampy land of Khuzistan drained into the Persian Gulf. Near the latter was the island and creek of Dauraqistan mentioned by Yaqut and Qazvini, where ships coming from India cast anchor. The name has not changed and is in use to this day. Basiyan was protected by a fortress, to which political prisoners were exiled by the Caliphs; as late as the thirteenth century, boats could pass up by a series of water channels to Askar Mukarram, a city which in the tenth century stood on both banks of the Masruqan Canal (Ab-i-Gargar), its site now being marked by the ruins known as Band-i-Qir, 'the Bitumen Dyke', some miles south of Shushtar. The modern village of the same name stands at the junction of the Gargar and Shatait streams, two miles or so below the old dam.

The principal physical feature of Khuzistan is the Karun River, with its many affluents, known to the Arabs in medieval times as the Dujail, and it then had a separate estuary into the Persian Gulf (see p. 42). On the Dujail stand the important towns of Ahwaz and Shushtar, both of which have a long history. The former, the capital of the province, is described by Muqaddasi as possessing in his day many great warehouses, where merchandise was collected from the inland towns and stored for transfer to Basra for final sale and export. A little below the town was a great weir, the Shahdurwan or Shad Rawan, which dammed back and raised the waters of the river for irrigation purposes; three canals left the river above the weir, in which were sluices for regulating the level; these, when opened in flood time, saved the town from inundation. Remains of the weir and the canals are still to be seen. The district which the canals watered was accounted among the richest in Persia and produced, in particular, the finest crops of sugar-cane.

According to Muqaddasi, the climate of Ahwaz was execrable, hot winds blew all day, and at night sleep was impossible by reason of the innumerable mosquitoes and bugs, which 'bite like wolves'. Snakes and scorpions, he says, infested the surrounding

plain, which in many parts was a salt marsh, and the rice-flour bread on which the population fed was most indigestible. Yaqut speaks in most uncomplimentary terms of the inhabitants: 'the people of this country', he says, 'are known for their avarice, the heaviness of their minds, and their low inclinations. A year's stay among them suffices to break down the intelligence and to degrade the character of the best endowed'; nor could he say better things for its climate. 'Fever there reigns constantly, and one sees none but pale and emaciated faces.' With the disappearance of the weir, and consequently of irrigation, Ahwaz now enjoys an excellent climate: mosquitoes are seldom seen and the air is exceedingly dry. Ahwaz was, and still is, the most important road-centre in the district, being in direct communication with Istakhr (Persepolis), by way of Ramhurmuz and Arrajan, on the east; with Wasit and Baghdad on the west; and with Shushtar and Basra on the north and south respectively.[1]

In complete contrast to the city of evil fame just described, was the second capital of Khuzistan, called Shushtar by the Persians and Tustar by the Arabs, situated about sixty miles north of Ahwaz. Muqaddasi describes the town as surrounded by grape, orange, and date gardens, and it was, he says, most beautiful and pleasant to live in, though the summer heat was extreme. Mustawfi (fourteenth century) gives the fullest and most interesting account of it. He says:

'It was built by king Hushang the Pishdadian; and having fallen to ruin was restored by Ardashir Babakan, who laid out the plan to resemble the shape of a horse. King Sapor II, when he had returned to Iran after overcoming the Caesar of Rome, and thus becoming sovereign lord, imposed on Caesar the task of setting aright all the ruin that he had caused in the land of Iran. Further he, the Caesar, was set to divide into three channels the river of Shustar, and to build across these a mighty weir, that set flowing the Canal of Dashtabad, which is the chief glory of the district of Shustar.... Sapor II erected a great palace in Shustar. The circuit of the town is 500 paces. It has four gates. The climate is extremely hot, for mostly during spring and summer the hot simoon wind blows. The water, however, here is very digestive, whereby in spite of the great heat heavy meals can be eaten, and no evil ensue. The lands are very fertile, so that ploughing the land with an ass is all that is needed. Corn, cotton and the sugar-cane all grow excellently, and provisions are always cheap.... The men are dark-skinned and lean.'[2]

The great weir of Shushtar, remains of which still exist and

[1] Le Strange (2). [2] Mustawfi (2), *Nuzhat al Qulub*.

serve a useful function, was built to raise the water sufficiently high for a canal to be taken from the Dujail above the city, which should water the lands to the eastward. This canal, now the Ab-i-Gargar, was in the earlier Middle Ages known as the Masruqan; the main stream was rejoined by the Masruqan some twenty-five miles south of Shushtar.[1]

Dizful, i. e. 'the Castle Bridge', took its name from a famous bridge, said to have been built by Shapur II, the remains of which still exist. The place and bridge went by various names at different times, e. g. Qantarat ar Rum, Qantarat ar Rud, and Qantarat az Zab. In the fourteenth century Mustawfi speaks of the bridge as having forty-two arches, being 520 paces in length, with a width of roadway of fifteen paces. South-east of Dizful lie the ruins called Shahabad, marking the site of Jundi Shapur, which in the time of the Sasanians was the capital of Khuzistan, and which, as late as the time of the Caliph Al Mansur, was famed for its great medical school.

The littoral of the province of Fars of the Middle Ages occupied practically the whole of the eastern coast of the Persian Gulf proper, extending from the Tab River almost to the Strait of Ormuz. To the Greeks this district was known as Persis, and they, in error, used the name of this, the central province, to connote the whole kingdom. And their misuse of the name is perpetuated throughout Europe to the present day, for, with us, Persia—from the Greek *Persis*—has become the common term for the whole empire of the Shah, whereas the native Persians call their country the Kingdom of Iran, of which Fars, the ancient Persis, is but one of the southern provinces.[2] Shiraz, the capital of Fars, was founded in the year A. D. 684, in the time of the Omayyads, and soon came to eclipse the older Istakhr. Under the Abbasids, Fars still kept the division into five *kuras*, or districts, which had been organized by the Sasanians. The islands on the eastern shore of the Gulf were counted as of Fars.

The Arab geographers divided Fars into two regions—*Jurm* and *Sard*—i. e. the Hot Lands and Cold Lands; and this physical division of the low coastal lands from the highlands beyond the passes into the mountains is current to-day under the names of the *Garmsir* and *Sardsir*.

The places on the coast of Fars which came into more or less prominence, at one time or another in its history during the Middle Ages, were Mahruban, Siniz, Jannaba, Siraf, and the

[1] Le Strange (2). [2] *Idem.*

islands of Qais and Hormuz, though, strictly speaking, the last-named is geographically associated with the adjoining province of Kirman; all, without exception, are but names at the present day. Siraf, Qais, and Hormuz, each of which in turn so romantically figured in Persian Gulf affairs, will be treated in a succeeding chapter.

Qudama (ninth century) in his very accurate *Book of Roads and Taxes*, says, 'the maritime towns of the country (Persia) are Mahruban, Siniz, Jannaba, Tawwaj,[1] and Siraf.' Mahruban, known also as Mahruyan, was situated at the head of the Gulf, close to the western frontier of Fars, which in those days was marked by the Tab or Hindiyan River (then known as the Shirin). This was the first port reached by ships bound for India after leaving Basra and the Tigris estuary, and was accounted the port of Arrajan, a prosperous town on the high road between Khuzistan and Fars, fallen, by the fourteenth century, completely into ruin. The splendid ruin of the great bridge across the Tab at this point, alone marks to-day the site of Arrajan. Linen was made at Mahruban, and dates were exported, but shipping was its principal industry. Nasir-i-Khusraw touched at this place in 1052, and thus describes it:

'Going eastward (i. e. from Abadan) we reached Mahruban, a large town built on the sea-shore having a great market and a fine mosque. Rain-water is the only water obtainable here, for there are neither wells nor *kanat*,[2] from which sweet water may be obtained. The inhabitants store water in cisterns and reservoirs; and at Mahruban are three great caravanserais, so solidly built and so high that they resemble fortified castles. On the *minbar* in the great mosque, I read the name of Yaqub son of Layth.[3] On asking the reason I was told that Yaqub had extended his conquests as far as this town, but that, since his time, no other emir of Khurasan had been sufficiently powerful to do likewise. . . . Mahruban is provisioned from the neighbouring towns, for it produces nothing but fish. It is a seat of commerce where customs dues are paid and where ships anchor.'

The site of Mahruban has completely disappeared, having been doubtless engulfed in the delta of the Hindiyan.

The next port down the Gulf was Siniz or Shiniz, the ruins of which lie near Bandar Dilam, about half a league from the open sea. According to Istakhri it was larger than Mahruban in the tenth century, and Muqaddasi speaks of the mosque and palace

[1] See below, Rishahr.

[2] See p. 83.

[3] Layth as Saffar, first prince of the dynasty of the Saffarides, who reigned A. H. 254–65.

of the governor, and of the markets as being well provided with wares. Yaqut tells us that it was half ruined by the Carmathians,[1] who sacked the port in A. D. 933. Mustawfi, however, speaks of it as still a flourishing place in the fourteenth century, where flax was grown and much linen made. Some thirty miles south-east of Siniz was Jannaba, the ruins of which still exist, west of the modern village of Ganaweh. According to Istakhri, Jannaba was extremely hot and did not afford safe anchorage, but was larger than Mahruban. It was celebrated as the birthplace of Abu Tahir, the founder of the sect of Carmathians. The Persians called the place Ganfah, or Ab-i-Gandah, from its foul water. According to Ibn Hawqal it was famed for the manufacture of linen garments, and its embroideries were 'esteemed by the Princes in all countries and sent to all parts of the world'.

One of the oldest sites on the littoral of Fars, to which reference is made very far back in antiquity, is the peninsula at the northern end of which stands modern Bushire—the *Mesambria* of the ancients, mentioned by Arrian among others. Towards the south end of this peninsula stood Rishahr or Rashahr,[2] the forerunner of Bushire, which latter, like Bandar Abbas, has only arisen in comparatively modern times and at the expense of older towns. The earliest settlement on this site may date back to the period of Babylonia's prosperity: numerous burial urns, bricks, and cuneiform inscriptions discovered in the neighbourhood in 1873 and 1877, and further important discoveries made by Pézard[3] in 1914, point to this. Rishahr of the Moslem geographers dates from the period of the Sasanians, to whom a re-foundation is ascribed: to distinguish it from the town of the same name in the district of Arrajan it was characterized as 'that near Tawwaj'. Until comparatively recent times it was a busy maritime town: even in Portuguese maps of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries 'Reixer' (a corruption of Rishahr) is marked as the chief emporium on the Persian coast. According to a note in the ancient geography of Moses of Chorene,[4] the finest pearls of the Persian Gulf were brought to the market of Rishahr, and de Barros,[5] in the sixteenth century, estimated the size of the town at 2,000 houses. Rishahr gradually declined as Bushire arose; it became the quarry out of which the material for Bushire,

[1] See note, p. 87.

[2] Not to be confounded with the other old town of Rishahr in the district of Arrajan.

[3] Pézard, M.

[4] Marquart's *Eranšahr*, Berlin, 1901.

[5] Barros, J. de.

as well as for several of the neighbouring villages, was obtained. Of the ancient town, only the ruins of the former fortress now remain, a moated rectangle some 200 yards square, which in its present form probably only dates from the Portuguese period. It is, however, unlike any other Portuguese fort on the Persian Gulf littoral, and may well be of greater antiquity and have been adapted by them to their needs. It was the first position occupied by the British (Baluchi) troops in the Anglo-Persian campaign of 1856–7 (see p. 257).

Rishahr receives but little notice by the Arab geographers; it is first mentioned by Yaqut. Mustawfi says:

'Rishahr was founded by Luhrasp the Kayanian, and Sapor I restored its buildings. It is a medium sized town, standing on the shore of the Persian Gulf; the climate is very hot and damp. In summer the people cover themselves with acorn flour, otherwise, by reason of excessive sweating, (the skin) becomes sore. The crops here are dates, and the Rishahr linen (is famous). Most of the inhabitants are occupied in the sea trade; but they excel in nothing.'

Ibn al Balkhi refers to the town in much the same terms; and of the people he says: 'They have neither excellence nor strength of character, being of a weak nature.'[1] Hafiz Abru[2] (early fifteenth century) describes it as 'a small town on the sea-shore', so by this time it seems to have sunk below the rank of a middle-sized town. Waring, who visited Bushire in 1802, writes as follows of Rishahr:

'Pieces of cannon, and human images cut in stone, have been occasionally found among the ruins of this place. The Hindus resident at Bushire purchase these stones at enormous prices and . . . are particularly careful in preventing a stranger from polluting them with his hands. . . . Possibly these images may be the representative of some Christian saint.'

A more probable supposition is that they are statues of Shapur—such as are not unfrequently found in ruins of Sasanian date. None such are known in Bushire at the present day.

Tawwaj, situated on a river some distance inland, a noted town at the time of the Moslem conquest, was a place of great trade, famous for its linen stuffs, woven in divers colours with gold thread ornament; but its site has never been certainly identified, though the extensive mounds in the vicinity of Dih Kuhna

[1] Le Strange considers that this comment more probably refers to the modern Tahiri.

[2] His geography, in Persian, exists only in MS.

correspond roughly to its probable position.[1] The principal roads inland from the coast of Fars centred on Shiraz.

Kirman. In this province Muhammadan rule became firmly established soon after A.D. 642. The province has no separate history, as far as the Persian Gulf is concerned, apart from Fars, until the time of the Seljuks, when the vigorous Malik Kawand of Kirman (1041–72) hewed out a kingdom for himself in Kirman which was held by his descendants for one and a half centuries, and included, till the reign of Arslan Shah (1100–41), the province of Oman, which Kawand annexed by an overseas expedition.

At the time of the great Mongol irruption under Chengiz Khan, one Borak Hajib managed to assume control over Kirman under the overlordship of Chengiz. One of Borak's successors, the widow of Qutb ud Din, was ruling over the province when Marco Polo passed through on his outward journey to the East, at the end of the thirteenth century. Polo says: 'Kirman is a kingdom, which is also properly in Persia, and formerly it had a hereditary prince. Since the Tartars conquered the country the ruler is no longer hereditary, but the Tartar sends to administer whatever Lord he pleases.'[2] At this period Hormuz was under Kirman; but further details of the history of the province, in so far as they bear upon the Persian Gulf, will be recorded in a succeeding chapter.

Makran. It is not unlikely that in early times Makran formed one of the satrapies of the great Persian Empire; and, though the distinct nationality acquired by the inhabitants is marked at the present day under the name of Baluch, some traces appear in their language of an early affinity to the Persians. There seems to be but little definite information of the ancient history of this region, but it may be assumed that, having originally been a Persian province, remote and scarcely known, it gradually acquired an independent position under native or other rulers.

Native tradition goes back to a period when Makran, as a united independent country, was ruled throughout its extent by a dominant family known as 'Maliks'. Under them it was constitutionally a single state, but divided into several governments or provinces, each held by a malik having absolute power in his own province. These again were subdivided into districts and dependencies, immediately governed by hereditary petty chiefs.

[1] Le Strange. See Ibn al Balkhi (2), p. 321, *n.*

[2] Yule, H. and Cordier, H.

Library
Arizona State Museum

The provinces, indeed, composed a Baluch ' federation ', united under one supreme authority—always the ruler of the province of Kej, who received homage and tribute from the rest. Such a federation seems specially adapted to the character of the Baluchis.

The rule of the maliks seems to have terminated in the latter part of the seventeenth century; they were ousted by a family named Bulaidi. There is no detailed local account to be had of Makran history previous to this overthrow, nor does it seem to be known whether the maliks were of Baluch extract, or whether ' malik ' was their titular or family name.[1]

[1] Ross, E. C. (3). See further, Schindler (2) and Mockler (1) and (2).

V. Tang-i-Buharigh, Khuskh Kuh, east of Bandar Abbas

VI

THE MIDDLE AGES (*Continued*)

OMAN AND BAHRAIN

History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train of disorderly appetites, . . .

BURKE, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1790.

'HISTORICALLY, politically, and geographically, Oman has always been the most isolated part of Arabia. As far as outside communication with other Arabs is concerned, Oman was for centuries past an island, with the sea on one side and the desert on the other. The people are even more primitive than Arabs in general. Only Maskat has its eye open to the wide world; that is the only port in all Oman at which steamers call. Ottoman rule never extended to Oman, not even under Suleiman the Magnificent; nor did any of the early Caliphs long exercise their authority here. The whole country has for centuries been under independent rulers, called imams or sultans. The population is wholly Arab and Mohammedan, and derived from two principal stocks, the Kahtani and the Adnani—rival races ever at feud or war with each other.' [1]

Thus Zwemer succinctly sums up the history of Oman, a region which, nevertheless, looms large in the story of the Persian Gulf. The very early history of the country is obscure: the references to be found in the classical writers provide little or no data on which to form any idea of the political conditions of the time, and the information they give us is geographical rather than historical and bears almost wholly on the coastal tracts. Even the most eminent Arabian historians contribute little beyond incidental notices of the country, either just before or during its dependence on the Eastern Caliphate. It is from a chronicle known as the *Keshf ul Ghummeh* [2] that we begin to derive information of a definitely historical colour.

No attempt can be made at this stage to define the limits of the

[1] Zwemer, S. M. (2).

[2] Or 'Dispeller of Grief', written by Sirhan bin Sa'id bin Sirhan. See Ross, E. C. (2), and Badger, G. P.

Oman of early history, but it may be stated generally that the name comprised a wider area than at the present time, and that it extended westward to the Yemen and included the territory of Bahrain.

Knowledge regarding the earliest peopling of Oman is based almost entirely on tradition and is therefore shadowy and fragmentary, but it is naturally very closely connected with the rest of the peninsula of Arabia. Its earliest people appear to have been of Eur-African (Hamitic) stock (see Chap. II).[1] They seem to have been eventually displaced or absorbed by a great Semitic immigration from the north, the invaders being composed of two main stocks—the Qahtani (descendants of Joktan or Yoktan), who colonized the Yemen, and the Adnani (or Nizari), who peopled that part of the peninsula farther to the north.

According to their own traditions the Arabs of Oman belong to either one or other of these two stocks. The Qahtani claim to be the earliest settlers, while the Adnani were, for the most part, later immigrants whose pedigree is regarded as less purely Arab. There appear to have been various waves of immigration of both stocks at successive periods. The earliest settlers from the Yemen were the Yaariba, of Qahtani origin; another specific wave of migration appears to have been that of the Azd tribe (who form such a large proportion of the population of Oman of the present day), descendants of Kahlan, whose home was also originally in Yemen.

The dispersal of the Azd over different parts of Arabia has been ascribed to the catastrophe of the bursting of the Dam of Mareb,[2] which compelled them to move out of Saba, perhaps mainly eastwards. But this event must in any case be regarded merely as an incident in the peopling of Oman.

Earlier, according to tradition, Oman was already under the sway of the Qahtanis of Yemen. Yaarib, descendant of Qahtan, is said to have established domination over all southern Arabia including Hadhramaut and Oman, about 700–800 years before the Christian Era. His line supplied a succession of 'Imams' to

[1] Gen. x. 6, 7: 'And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan. And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba and Dedan.'

[2] 'In the reign of one Muzaykiya, whose date is uncertain, but possibly should be placed before the third century. This catastrophe has been declared unhistorical because the inscriptions still extant on stones of the ruined dam show that it still served some purpose as late as the sixth century' (Hogarth (6)). Badger gives about A. D. 120.

the country from A. D. 1624 to 1741. He was succeeded by his son Jashjub; and then by his grandson Abd Shams, the progenitor of Himyar (the founder of the Himyarite Dynasty) and Kahlan. It is uncertain who immediately succeeded Himyar—whether it was his brother Kahlan, or his son Wathil, or his grandson Shammir; but it is distinctly recorded that Wathil ruled over Oman, and Shammir is recorded to have recognized the authority of the Persians, thus corroborating the local tradition that at this time Oman fell under the domination of the Persians, probably during the reign of Cyrus the Great, about 536 B. C.[1]

The Persians were subsequently expelled by the aid of other immigrants from Yemen, consisting of a number of the tribe of Azd, who were dispersed at the rupture of the dam as suggested above. These Azdites, under Nasr the son of Azd, went eventually into Oman and were afterwards known as 'the Azd of Oman'. Some seventy years later, another branch of the family settled in Bahrain, which then embraced a large tract of the mainland of eastern Arabia as well as the islands known by that name at the present day.

Other so-called Azdite families appear to have migrated to Oman from Nejd, but at what period it is difficult to ascertain: strictly speaking, these were rather descendants of one Khatama, son of Anmar, son of Nizar, son of Maadd, son of Adnan, the alleged descendant of Abir (the patriarch Eber) through Ishmael, and were conceivably the progenitors of the Adnani or Nizari[2], as they are sometimes known in Oman. And as time went on, there were other immigrations both from Nejd and the Yemen.

Enough has been said in this brief outline of the peopling of Oman to show that it came about from various sources at various times. One fact appears to admit of scarcely any doubt, namely, that the Yemeni Azdites were the predominant and ruling factor in Oman up to the end of the sixth century. Baladhuri, speaking of a period not long anterior to Islam, says: 'The Azd were the principal inhabitants of Oman, but there was a large population beside them.'[3] At this time Noshirwan (Khosroes I) sent a large army, commanded by Wahraz, into

[1] Caussin de Perceval (1).

[2] 'Communities of them exist in different parts of Oman, where they are further distinguished by the names of the districts which they severally occupy, as the Nizariyya of Semail, of Izki, &c.' (Badger).

[3] *Futuh al Buldan.*

Yemen, which he subdued, and also annexed Hadhramaut, Mahra, Oman, and Bahrain to the Persian dominions. These provinces, however, did not continue long under the Persian yoke, for, about A. D. 630, Muhammad the Prophet, who by that time had consolidated his power by the subjugation of Yemen and Nejd, sent an emissary to two brothers, Jaifar and Abd, the sons of Julanda of the Azd tribe, who then ruled over Oman. He summoned them to embrace Islam and abandon idolatry, and this they appear to have done readily.

On the accession of Muhammad's successor, Abu Bekr, Oman —as well as Hadhramaut and Bahrain—revolted. Abu Bekr sent several of his generals against them and eventually extinguished all traces of insurrection in Oman. A passage in Baladhuri [1] records that in A. H. 15 (A. D. 636), Omar, Abu Bekr's successor, appointed one Othman bin Abi al Asi as governor of Oman and Bahrain, from which it may fairly be assumed, therefore, that Oman was subject to the Arabian Caliphate at this date. The authority of the Caliphs appears, however, to have been merely nominal until the accession of the Omayyad Caliph Abdul Malik, A. H. 65 (A. D. 684), who sent various expeditions thither, eventually taking possession of Oman and placing it under a governor of his own selection. In course of time, natives were promoted to subordinate posts as collectors of revenue, and eventually the office of *wali* was conferred on one Janah bin Abbada, of the Hinawi tribe.[2] Taking advantage of this concession, the people proceeded, about A. D. 751, to elect a ruler of their own in the person of Julanda bin Masud, who was styled the first of the rightful 'Imams'[3] of Oman: previous rulers do not appear to have borne any distinctive title. This effort at independence seems to have been stimulated by religious influence, for at this period the *Ibadhiya*[4] appear to have become the predominant sect in Oman.

[1] *Futuh al Buldan*, p. 76.

[2] The Hinawi were among the early immigrants into Oman and are considered to constitute the majority of the Beduin inhabitants of Oman Proper. They (the Hinawi) have always exercised considerable influence in the country, and in more recent times have come to be regarded as representing one of the two great parties—the other being the *Ghafiri*—into which the population is generally considered to be divided.

[3] From an Arabic root signifying to 'aim at' or 'to follow after'. Thus *Imam* means, primarily, an exemplar, or one whose example ought to be imitated (Badger).

[4] The *Ibadhiya* sect are an offshoot of the Khawarij (i. e. Outsiders), who did

Thenceforward, from the time of Julanda, till towards the end of the eighteenth century—with the exception of an interregnum of about 260 years from A. D. 1154, during which the Bani Nabhan tribe acquired the ascendancy and established a dynasty of *Maliks*, or kings, who ruled over the greater part of the interior—Oman continued to be ruled by a long succession of elective Imams[1] possessing supreme military and political as well as religious authority, chosen mostly from the Azd, Hinawi, Kindi, or Yaariba tribes, with their capitals at the interior town either of Nizwa, Izki, Bahlah, Rostaq, or Yabrin.[2] The history of this period (recorded in great detail in the *Keshf ul Ghummeh*), with the exception of a few outstanding events, is largely a story of inter-tribal quarrels and intrigues for power, of which it would weary the reader to give an account. Yet certain happenings therein recorded are of wider significance and should be noted.

not accept the principle of the divine right of *succession* to be restricted and reserved to a single family, but who, according to Sale, 'affirmed that a man might be promoted to the dignity of Imam, or prince, though he were not of the tribe of Kuraish, nor even a freeman, provided he was a just and pious person, and endued with the other requisite qualifications'. Opposed to the Khawarij are the *Shiahs*, a term specially applied to adherents of Ali, whom the former repudiated. Sale says: 'they maintain him to be the lawful Khalifah and Imam, and that the supreme authority, both in spirituals and temporals, of right belongs to his descendants, notwithstanding they may be deprived of it by the injustice of others, or their own fear. They also teach that the office of Imam is not a common thing depending on the will of the vulgar, so that they may set up whom they please; but a fundamental affair of religion, and an article which the Prophet could not have neglected, or left to the fancy of the common people.'

The Ibadhiya of Oman are the followers of Abdallah bin Ibadh, who lived during the reign of the Caliph Marwan II (A.D. 744–9). They denied that Ali or his successors were legitimate representatives of the Prophet, and disallowed the claims of the Baghdad Caliphs, as well in civil as religious matters, and set up one of their own, whom they invested with corresponding powers in both capacities. They acted upon the same principles by uniformly electing Imams for their personal merits or popularity, irrespective of family descent, for the space of nearly 900 years, reckoning from Julanda.

[1] The method of election and inauguration, as described by the author of the *Keshf*, is interesting: 'Four of the principal chiefs met together in the house of the candidate, who was required to assent to certain conditions submitted to him. The assent given, the chiefs went forth to the people, who had assembled from all parts of Oman to take part in the ceremony, and made known to them the result of their deliberations. The president of the Council then stood up and solemnly proclaimed him Imam. After receiving the allegiance of the people he entered upon the duties of his office, which, besides the conduct of the civil administration, involved the duty of leading the public prayers.'

[2] For a list of Imams, see Ross (2) and Badger.

During Al Warith's Imamate the Caliph Harun ar Rashid (A.D. 789–809) made an ineffectual attempt to reconquer Oman.

Under the rule of Ghassan, his successor, an end was put to the incursions of formidable pirates who operated on Oman waters and whose head-quarters seem to have been at the north of the Indus. The reference is interesting as evidence of the very early piracies practised in these seas, and of the skill at sea of the Omani mariners.

During a state of anarchy, the Abbasid Caliph Muatadhid (A.D. 892–902) ordered his governor over Bahrain, Muhammad bin Nur, to invade Oman, which he is reported to have done with an army of 25,000 men, levied principally from the Nizar and Tai tribes. Azzan, the Imam at this time, was slain and his head sent as a trophy to the Caliph. Many families left Oman for Hormuz, Basra, and Shiraz, and Nur ruled at Nizwa with a rod of iron: 'he cut off the hands and ears, and scooped out the eyes of the nobles, inflicted unheard-of outrages upon the inhabitants, destroyed the water-courses, burnt the books, and utterly desolated the Country'. When Nur returned to Bahrain he left a deputy over Oman who fell a victim to the vengeance of the infuriated and outraged people. After this occurrence no less than seven Imams were successively elected within a space of thirty years; and the people of Oman were intermittently subject to tribute to the Caliphs. Subsequently, and on more than one occasion, the forces of the Caliph invaded Oman, or they were invited to intervene in intestine quarrels; but by about A.D. 1000, on the approaching disintegration[1] of the Abbasid Empire, we read of no further interference of the Caliphs in the affairs of this province.

The Omanis reverted, undisturbed, to their old system of government, but, about the middle of the twelfth century, the Nabhan tribe acquired the ascendancy and ruled over the greater part of the interior of the country until the re-establishment of the Imamate in A.D. 1429; this tribe, however, continued to exercise considerable influence for quite two centuries longer, and it was not until the Yaariba line of Imams was initiated, in 1624, that their influence was finally suppressed.

While under the rule of the Nabhan maliks, according to the *Keshf*

[1] 'The power of the Caliphs began to decline perceptibly from the reign of Radhi b'Illah, A.D. 936, until Baghdad was captured and the Caliphate abolished by the Moghuls under Hulagu-Khan, A.D. 1258, after it had been held by the Al Abbas dynasty for about 523 years' (Badger).

ul Ghummeh, Oman was twice invaded from Persia, once by the 'people of Shiraz', A.D. 1265, and again a little later by the Amir Mahmud bin Ahmed al Kusy, from Hormuz,[1] then a petty principality of Arab origin on the mainland of Kirman, the invaders being Mongols, who at that time were masters of practically the whole of Persia. The invaders were repelled on the later occasion, but the so-called 'Kings of Hormuz' continued to claim jurisdiction over the sea-board of Oman up to the beginning of the sixteenth century. This century marks an epoch, viz. the appearance of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf. Here our narrative of the early history of Oman for the present ends, leaving the thread to be taken up again when we recount the story of Portuguese activities in Persian Gulf waters, with which the history of Oman from that time onwards to the seventeenth century is intimately bound up.

Of the successive Persian invasions of Oman few traces now remain: it is, however, highly probable that it is to the Persian invaders that Oman owes the first underground water-channels (*kariz* or *kanat*) which are to be seen, generally in ruins, in Oman as in Hasa, and the remarkable ruins and ambitious stone dams that occur on the Batina plain. And Persian husbandry may have contributed something to local agricultural practice, which in the inland districts is unexpectedly skilful. But of the Persian language, religion, and philosophy hardly any trace remains.

Bahrain. In the early centuries of our era, Bahrain (a term which now refers only to the islands of that name), on the middle Arabian shore of the Persian Gulf, was known as Hajar, from the name of its principal district, which comprised several small towns and villages, the chief of which latter was also called Hajar. It included, too, the district now known as Hasa. The early history of the region is fragmentary in the extreme.

Of the very first people of Bahrain we have no certain knowledge. The first definite light is shed upon the question by the historian Tabari,[2] in the ninth century. He gives the following account:

'In the time of the Ashkanian (Parthian) Kings (3rd cent. B.C.–3rd cent. A.D.), no Arabs were to be found in Iraq except those of the tribe of Maad, son of Adnan, descendants of those whom Nebuchadnezzar had

[1] The principality of Hormuz, for the time being, was subverted by the Mughals, but was subsequently re-established on the island of Jerun, now called Hormuz (see Chap. VII).

[2] Tabari.

brought as prisoners from Arabia. The other Arabs were all in the Hejaz, the desert, at Mecca, or in the Yemen, where they suffered from want of food and from intestinal wars. So a considerable number, Arab kings and Hejazi chiefs, left their country, not daring, however, to enter Iraq for fear of the Ashkanian kings, and established themselves in Bahrain and in Yemama. Yemama is a place in the desert embracing a great number of towns, one called Hajar, another Lahsa, and seven or eight others which to-day are occupied by the Carmathians.'

Caussin de Perceval [1] assigns about A.D. 190 as the date of this event, and gives the following version of a somewhat mythical story, based on the *Aghani* of Ibn Khaldun, which in the main points agrees with Tabari:

'These emigrant families had, at their head, Malik and his brother Amr and their nephew Zuhair. Arrived, about A.D. 190, at Hajar, the principal canton (district) of Bahrain, they found, on this territory, Nabataeans,[2] who wished to repulse them. The invaders fought them, drove them from their land and supplanted them.

'Before attempting to expel these ancient possessors of the ground they consulted a sybil (Kahina or Zerka daughter of Zuhair, sister of Malik) as to what they ought to do. The woman replied: "This place will be for you a *tunukh* (station) until there comes a raven with rings on its feet. It will alight on a palm tree and fly off croaking. So follow it; then to Hira! to Hira!"

'This was the reason why these emigrants took the name of *Tunukh*, or *Tunukhite*.

'Several hordes of Arabs soon joined them, among others the descendants of Konos from the Hejaz, a part of the tribe of Iyad, and a detachment of Azdites whose chief was Malik. These Azdites formed a part of the children of those who had quitted Mareb territory with Amr Muzaikiya; but it is not known precisely from what country they came when they appeared in Bahrain. Some say they separated from the Azdite colony domiciled at Batn-Marr in the Tehama; others believe that they came from Oman where another Azdite colony had established itself.

'All these families, of divers origin, formed a close alliance and swore mutual aid, to be always united. From that time they were known collectively under the name Tunukhites.

'After a sojourn of several years in Bahrain, the Tunukhites one day saw a raven, the feet of which were adorned with gold rings, alight upon a palm, and fly off with piercing croaks. They remembered the words of Zerka and set out on the march, following the bird, which conducted them into Iraq. They halted at a place where Malik established himself and laid the first

[1] Caussin de Perceval (1).

[2] i. e. An Aramaean people, natives of Chaldea. Cf. Strabo, on the colony of the Chaldeans who founded Gerra.

foundations of the city of Hira. . . . This story given by the author of the "Aghani" appears to be the most ancient, relative to the origin of the Tunukhites.

'Other historians give a more natural explanation than the story of the raven, for the settlement of these tribes in Iraq. It took place at the time when the Arsacid Empire, or the *Muluk u Tawaif*, troubled by revolts and disastrous wars, was beginning to totter. Iraq, which, up to this time, these kings had possession of, was open to attack. . . . The Arabs of Bahrain judged the circumstances favourable for seizing a country more fertile and better watered than that which they had made themselves masters of, and resolved to attempt the enterprise. Coming in successive waves they expelled the Aramaeans from Chaldea, or brought them under submission, and installed themselves in the country. The greater number, it is said, settled at Anbar (on the Euphrates below Falluja).'

From Tabari we learn that in the time of Ardashir (early third century) there was in Bahrain a king called Satirun who had entrenched himself in a fortress. Following his career of conquest of the countries around Fars, Ardashir sent an army into Bahrain, and after a year's siege the Persian king took the fortress, seized the treasure, and returned to Persia leaving his son Shapur I as regent.

Coming down to the early part of the fourth century we find, during the minority of Shapur II (A. D. 309–25), that tribes of Arabs from Bahrain (embracing at this time Hasa and Qatif) and Yemama made various raids on his territory. Shapur attacked and massacred them in large numbers, some of the survivors taking refuge in Mesopotamia, while those from Bahrain retired again to their own country. Wishing to get hold of these latter, Shapur embarked with his army upon the Persian Gulf, landed at Qatif, and put to the sword great numbers of the inhabitants of Bahrain. He seized Hajar, exterminated the greater part of the Abd al Qais tribe, wreaked a terrible vengeance on the Bajila Khatham, and fell upon the Tamim. When tired of killing he ordered his men to pierce the shoulders of the vanquished, tie them with ropes, and bring them as prisoners. This brutal treatment earned for Shapur the title in Oriental history of *Dhu'l Aqtaf*, or 'man of the shoulders'.[1] Bahrain then became an appanage of Fars.

The next epoch-making event in the history of Bahrain brings us down to the period of the dawn of Islam, at the beginning of the seventh century. The rule of Muhammad the Prophet was

[1] Caussin de Perceval (1).

gradually spreading eastward, and about the ninth year of his reign (A.D. 622) he sent his envoy Al Ala, son of Hadhrami, to approach Mundhir, chief of the tribe of Abd al Qais, who ruled the Arabs of Bahrain as lieutenant of the King of Persia (Khosroes II), inviting his people to embrace Islam. The proposal was accepted and the people, among whom the tribes of Abd al Qais and Bani Baqr were conspicuous, remained faithful to Islam until the time of Abu Bekr, the Prophet's successor to the Caliphate. On the death of Mundhir the Arabs of the country, left to themselves, denied at first the Mussulman faith, *en masse*, but one Jarud succeeded in bringing back the Abd al Qais to Islamism; the Baqr, however, persisted in their apostasy and endeavoured to create a king of their own. Muhammad sent Al Ala to quell the revolt; his army traversed the Nejd, skirted Yemama, and reached the friendly country of the Tamim lying between Yemama and Bahrain. The chief of the insurgents, Hotam, had made himself master of Qatif and most of the settlements comprised under the name of Hajar. Al Ala took the stronghold of Juwatha after a lengthy siege, during which Hotam died, finally captured the island of Darayn in the Persian Gulf, taking many prisoners and much booty, and re-established the authority of the Caliph. Sending his army back to Medina, Al Ala himself remained in Bahrain as governor in the name of Abu Bekr.[1] From this time onwards the region belonged to the dominion of the Omayyad Caliphate. Under the Abbasids it was attached to Oman and Yemama, from which it was not separated until the Carmathians established themselves there.

About the year A.D. 639 Al Ala made an unsuccessful attempt to assist in the extension of Moslem conquest eastward. He fitted out an expedition and crossed the Persian Gulf with the object of conquering Fars. Leaving his ships unprotected, he marched inland, and at first met with no opposition, but meeting at length with the enemy, an unsuccessful battle was fought and he found himself hemmed in. Dispatching a messenger hastily to Medina, the general Utba was sent with a force of 12,000 men around the northern shore of the Gulf, and was able to effect a junction with the army of Al Ala, who beat off the enemy and retired temporarily on Basra. The eventual conquest of Fars is dealt with in the preceding chapter.

From Ibn Khurdadhbih, who wrote about A.D. 864, we learn

[1] Tabari.

that in his time piracy was rife on the Bahrain coast. He says: 'the people of Bahrain are pirates; they have no cultivated fields, but possess date trees and camels', and among the towns or settlements of Bahrain he mentions Hajar, Qatif, Juwatha, and Darayn, the three latter being also mentioned by Qudama, who wrote a few years later. Qudama states that 'the product (to the Caliph) of all this province together with that of Yemama, according to the table of taxes drawn up for the year A.H. 237, amounts to 510,000 dinars'. Khurdadhbih makes a curious comment on the climate of Bahrain, which, he says, 'induces congestion of the liver', and also says: 'in this province grows a kind of date called *anabije*, from which a spirituous drink is made; the sweat of one drinking it changes the white colour of his clothing to yellow'.

Nasir-i-Khusraw says that Bahrain was peopled by the tribe of Abd al Qais, who came from the Tehama. He himself visited Lahsa (Hasa, Al Ahsa) in A.D. 1051, when returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca. It was originally a fortress in Bahrain not far from Hajar, the ancient capital of the district, and he gives a most enlightening and interesting account of the history and social conditions of the place in his time. Lahsa, he says, was founded by the Carmathian[1] chieftain Abu Tahir al Jannabi about A.H. 314 (A.D. 926), who called the place Al Muminiya. The Carmathians had overrun Bahrain at that period and were under a chief named Abu Sa'id. Khusraw tells us that 'Basra is the nearest town, under Mussulman authority, to Lahsa, and is distant 150 farsangs. There never has been a prince of Basra who has dared to attack Lahsa.' He goes on to say, in descriptive and discursive vein, that:

'The name Lahsa is applied to the town, suburbs, district round, and castle. Four strong concentric walls, solidly built of mud and separated the one from the other by a distance of one farsang, surround the town. There are abundant water sources, each of which is capable of turning four mills, and the water is so well utilized that none runs outside the walls. There

[1] 'The Carmathians (Ar. *Qaramitah*) began to raise disturbances in the Moslem empire about A.H. 276 (A.D. 889). The followers of the sect bore an inveterate hatred to Mussulmans generally, pretending that their own founder (Hamdan Qarmat) was a true prophet, who had given them a new law which abrogated all preceding revelations and which allowed them to drink, and to dispense with many of the requirements of Islam. They further turned the precepts of the Koran into allegory, teaching that prayer was the symbol of obedience to their Imam, and fasting that of concealing their doctrines from strangers' (Badger). See also Hogarth (6), p. 79 f.

is a fine town in the middle of the fortified enclosure possessing all the amenities of a great city, and having a population of more than 20,000 fighting men. Lahsa formerly had, as sovereign, a sherif called Abu Sa'id, who had led the people away from the tenets of Islamism; he exempted them from prayer and fasting, and persuaded them that he himself was their only refuge.

'On questioning the people on the subject of the sect to which they belong, they reply that they are Abu Sa'idi; they do not offer up prayers according to the canon and do not fast; all the same, they acknowledge that Muhammad, the Elect, received the gift of prophecy. Abu Sa'id has persuaded his followers that he will appear to them after his death. His tomb, over which a beautiful *meshshed* (shrine) has been raised, is in the interior of the town. As a last wish, he commanded that six of his descendants should for ever carry on his power and govern the people with justice and equity: he moreover commanded them to always remain united until his return. Abu Sa'id's descendants occupy even to this day a vast palace which is the seat of government. In the palace is a dais on which these six persons sit in council and from which they promulgate their orders and decrees, after they have come to an agreement. They are assisted by six *vezirs* who sit behind them on another platform. All matters are decided by them in council.

'When I was at Lahsa', he says, 'these princes possessed 30,000 negro or Abyssinian slaves, purchased with money, which were employed in agriculture and gardening. The people had to pay neither taxes nor tithes. Any one becoming poor or getting into debt, advances were made to him until his affairs were re-established; any one contracting a debt, his creditor claimed only the capital. On arrival at Lahsa, every stranger knowing a trade had a certain sum of money placed at his disposal until means of existence were assured to him. He could buy materials or the tools necessary for his trade and, when he desired so to do, he repaid the exact sum which had been loaned to him. If a house or mill became ruined, and if the owner had not the means to put his property into a state of repair, the governors told off a number of slaves to do the repairs either of the house or mill, without payment to the owner. At Lahsa, some of the mills were owned by the State and, in these, corn was ground into flour for private individuals, without any payment whatever being exacted. The upkeep of these mills and the wages of the workmen were a charge on the government. The princes hold the title of *Sayyid*, and the vezirs that of *Shayreh* (advisers).

'There is no longer any mosque at Lahsa where Friday prayers may be said: the *khutba* is not recited, nor are prayers said. A mosque has been built, however, at the expense of a Persian named Ali ibn Muhammad, a man devoted to the precepts of Islam, and one who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. He amassed a big fortune and came to the aid of pilgrims arriving in the town.

'Commercial transactions are made by means of lead contained in *kufs* (baskets or sacks) each weighing 6,000 dirhems. When a bargain has been

concluded they count a number of baskets and carry them away; this money is not allowed to be exported.

'At Lahsa, *futa* of high quality are manufactured and sent to Basra and other parts. No person is hindered from saying the canonical prayers, but the natives of the place do not perform the rite. When a prince gives audience, those addressing him receive in return replies full of softness and modesty. The inhabitants of Lahsa never drink wine. A horse saddled and adorned with collar and aigrette, which is changed from time to time, is held in readiness, day and night, at the door of the mausoleum of Abu Sa'id, to be mounted by him when he rises from the tomb. It is said that he made the following recommendation to his children: "If, when I return, you do not recognize me, strike me on the nape with a sabre. If indeed it be me, I shall come back to life immediately." He ordered this, so that none should attempt to impersonate him.

'In the time of the Caliphs of Baghdad, a ruler of Lahsa marched against Mecca at the head of an army. He took the city and massacred the pilgrims who were performing the *tawaf* (or circumambulation of the Kaaba, or black stone). He tore away the stone from the angle in which it was set and carried it off to Lahsa. Its partisans said that the Kaaba was the "lodestone of men", for it attracted them from all parts of the world; they were not aware that it was the pre-eminence and glory of Muhammad, alone, that drew the people to Mecca. In fact, the black stone remained for many years at Lahsa, but no one came to visit it, and in the end it was ransomed and restored to its place.[1]

'At Lahsa all kinds of animal flesh are on sale: cats, dogs, asses, oxen, sheep, &c.; but the head and the skin of the animal must be placed alongside the carcase, so that the customer may know what he is buying. The people fatten dogs, just as they do sheep in pasture; when they are so fat that they are no longer able to walk they are killed and eaten.

'Leaving Lahsa and going eastward, one reaches the sea after seven farsangs, and on embarking, Bahrain, an island fifteen farsangs in length, is reached. Bahrain is also the name of an important town surrounded by date plantations. Pearl fishing is carried on in the sea of Bahrain; half of the pearls taken by the divers belong to the chiefs of Lahsa. If a southerly direction is taken, one reaches Oman, situated on the coast of the peninsula of Arabia. This district, with an area of eighty square farsangs, is surrounded on three sides by impassable desert. Oman is a hot country where grow the trees which produce the Indian nuts called *nargil*. If one goes directly eastward from Oman, one reaches the Makran coast and the coast of Qais. If, on the other hand, one goes in a southerly direction, one reaches Aden; while going in the opposite direction brings one to the province of Fars.

'Dates are so abundant at Lahsa that they are given to beasts of burden

[1] It was Abu Tahir, son of Abu Sa'id, who carried off the black stone from Mecca, A.H. 317 (A.D. 929). It was restored by the Carmathians, A.H. 339.

to fatten them. There are times when more than a thousand *man* of dates are sold for a *dinar*.

'On leaving Lahsa and going northward, one finds, at a distance of seven farsangs, a district called Qatif, with a large town of the same name. Great groves of date palms are to be seen there.

'An Arab amir once marched against Lahsa and, after a year's siege, stormed its four walls. He carried off a great quantity of booty but failed to conquer the people. When he saw me, he questioned me on the bearing of the stars and thus interrogated me: "My aim is to seize Lahsa, shall I succeed or not? for the inhabitants of this city are a people devoid of religion." I replied in what I considered were the most suitable terms.

'On my part, I consider the Beduin Arabs very similar to the people of Lahsa as regards their irreligion; there are individuals among them who do not pass water over their hands during the whole year. What I here state is the outcome of personal observation, and my allegations are based not on idle talk, for I have sojourned in their midst during nine consecutive months. I could not endure the milk which the Beduins offered me whenever I asked for water. When I refused the milk and begged for water their reply was: "When you see water, ask for it; but who has any?"'

Writing about a century later than Nasir-i-Khusraw, Idrisi, who however had no personal knowledge of the region (nor indeed of any part east of Asia Minor), adds little to our knowledge. But he tells us that in his time it was difficult to get by road from Sohar in Oman to Bahrain (distant about twenty days' march) 'on account of the state of war and the continual conflicts in which the Arabs live, affording no security to either the persons or property of travellers'. He speaks of the country north of Qatif as peopled by the tribe of Amir Rabia, and among the towns of Bahrain mentions Hajar, Qatif, Al Ahsa, and Khatha, at which latter place lances known under the name of *khathiya* were made.

'The principal island of Bahrain', he says, 'is *Awal*,[1] six miles in length and breadth. Its capital is Bahrain, a populous town, the environs of which are fertile and produce grass and dates in abundance. There are numerous sources of sweet water, many of which form cascades with sufficient force to turn mill-stones. The island is governed by an independent chief. The inhabitants of the two shores are satisfied with his justice and piety, and when he dies he is replaced by a person of equal virtue and equity.'

Abul Fida (A.D. 1321), Syrian prince and geographer, who compiled largely from the works of his predecessors, informs us that 'Bahrain is contiguous to Nejd and is also called Hajar'. By his time the town of Lahsa seems to have diminished in

[1] The reference here appears to be to the present island of Muharraq, rather than to the main island, to which the name Awal was formerly applied.

importance, for he says: 'the town is small . . . and is devoid of walls'. He defines its position as 'about two days W., slightly by S., of Qatif', and says it was 'surrounded by palms on all sides, like the *gutha* of Damascus'. At Qatif, on the coast, 'there are palms, but less numerous than at Lahsa, and there are places where men dive (for pearls)'. He was informed by a native of Qatif that 'the town has a wall with four gates and a ditch. At high tide the sea comes up to the wall, but at ebb a part of ground reappears above water.' 'It was situated', he says, 'at the end of a gulf, where big ships can enter with their cargo at high tide.'

Ibn Batuta's later account of Bahrain, though he confuses the district with the town, is much more authoritative than that of Abul Fida, for he traversed the district on his way to Mecca, having crossed the Persian Gulf from the famous port of Siraf. 'Bahrain', he says, 'is a fine and considerable city, with gardens, trees and streams. Water is procured at little cost: it suffices to dig the ground with the hands, and water is found. In this place are palm enclosures, and pomegranates, lemons, and cotton are cultivated. The temperature is very high and there is much sand which often buries the dwellings.' Land communication between Bahrain and Oman appears to have been entirely interrupted in Batuta's time, owing to the encroachment of sand on the road, so that 'one no longer goes from Oman to this town except by sea'. Qatif was 'a fine large place with many palms and inhabited by Arab tribes who are out and out Rafidhites,[1] who openly manifest their heresy and fear no one'. Batuta passed through Hajar (Al Hasa), 'a town concerning which there is a proverb, "like carrying dates to Hajar", for, there, are found more palms than in any other town, so that the inhabitants feed their beasts of burden on them. The people are Arabs belonging for the most part to the tribe of Abd al Qais, son of Aqsa.'

[1] Or Rafizi, lit. 'A forsaker'. A term used for a body of soldiers who have deserted their commander and turned back again, applied to a sect of Shiahs who joined Zaid the son of Ali, the son of al Husain, the second son of the Khalifa Ali, who, when they had submitted to Zaid, demanded that he should abuse Abu Bekr and Umar, the first two Khalifas of the Sunnis; but Zaid refused to do so, for, he said, 'They were both Wazirs of my forefather Mohammed'. Upon this they *forsook* the party of Zaid, and were called Rafizah. Zaid had then only fourteen faithful companions left, and he was soon surrounded by Al Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, the general of the Imam Jafar's army, and fell at the head of his brave companions, not one of them surviving him (Hughes, *Dict. of Islam*).

The term Rafizi is used by Sunni Muslims for any sect of Shiahs.

VII

SIRAF, QAIS, AND HORMUZ

> Mean men a state may shake;
> But 'twere a giant's task to make
> Secure the shaken state again
> Unless the kindly God should guide
> For mortal hand the ruling rein.
>
> PINDAR, *Pyth.* iv. 12.

THESE places, successively, fill romantic pages in the history of the Persian Gulf for about seven centuries, dating from the ninth. As to Siraf, Vincent,[1] followed by Sir W. Ouseley,[2] supposed its site to be opposite to the island of Qais, where, however, no ruins exist. Morier, who appears to have written from hearsay, refers to the ruins at the actual site of Tahiri and mentions sculptures 'with Persepolitan character',[3] which, however, have not been found by later visitors. The first person to identify the site was Captain Kempthorne of the Indian Navy, who visited it in 1835, and gives an account of it.[4]

The site of Siraf is marked by the modern village of Tahiri, situated on the coast, in long. 52° 20′ E.; an insignificant place inhabited chiefly by fishermen of Arab descent. There is a small square fort on a little hill at the west end, at the foot of the range of mountains which here rises to a height of 5,000 feet and runs parallel to the Persian coast; between this range and the sea is a lower ridge of limestone from 600 to 700 feet high, ending abruptly in a precipitous escarpment: on the slopes of this ridge ruins are situated. The ruins of the old Muhammadan town of Siraf extend along the shore for perhaps two miles west of the village of Tahiri, mere heaps of rough masonry, stretching from the water's edge far up the slope of the foot-hills. Among the debris are numerous ruined water-cisterns, constructed in a style still prevailing in the country, i. e. in the form of oblong excavations lined with gypsum or cement, with arched coverings to prevent evaporation, which, however, have mostly fallen in. Much broken pottery, including fragments of Chinese porcelain,

[1] Vincent, W. (2) (3).

[2] Ouseley, vol. i.

[3] Morier (1), p. 51; and (2), p. 34. He also states that 'among the ruins of the city are two wells pierced to a great depth and stabling for a hundred horses excavated from the solid rock'.

[4] Kempthorne, G. B.

is strewn about. In 1857 the only building of the old city left standing was a large mosque of well-cut stone, which had all the appearance of having been a handsome building, but was then in a ruinous condition. Close to the mosque was a *kanat* without water; and there were also many monolithic tombstones or grave-covers of arched form, ornamented with Kufic inscriptions. One such, which has been placed in the British Museum, is ascribed to the closing years of the tenth century.

The above are the principal remains of the Muhammadan city, so renowned in the Middle Ages, but a little inland there are other older remains of much interest, fully described by Stiffe.[1] The precipitous faces of ravines leading through the foot-hills are studded with chambers excavated in the rock face, many so high up as to be inaccessible without the aid of a ladder. The entrances are about three feet by two, but they often widen into two or more cemented chambers, containing much fine dust and crumbling human bones, suggesting Zoroastrian places of sepulture. Beyond, again, are even more curious and interesting remains on the slope of the hillside. A flight of low broad steps, cut in the rock on either side of a ravine, affords easy ascent to this ruin-field. The whole hillside, for about half a mile square, appears to have been denuded of its upper stratum of sandstone, leaving here and there monolithic pillars in situ, the dimensions of the largest being nine by six feet and from twelve to fourteen feet high. The cleared space on the hillside is honeycombed with troughs (apparently tombs), varying from nine to two feet in length, by one and a half to two feet wide, and one to three feet deep, separated only by thin partitions of rock. There are rows and rows of such. No traces of any covers have been found, but many of the troughs had a small ledge left all round, a few feet below the top, as if to support a lid. The largest of the monolithic pillars had been hollowed, the entrance, about two feet square, giving access to a rectangular chamber about seven feet by four. There are many wells, two to three feet in diameter, on the hillside, one high up the hill going to the immense depth of 204 feet and holding good water. The precise history of this ruin-field remains to be unravelled. In the *Bibliothèque Orientale*,[2] it is stated that ancient Siraf was founded by Kei Kaus of the Kayanian dynasty,[3] supposed to be contemporary with David: the ruins, in any case, suggest the possibility of a settlement at this spot much earlier even than Moslem Siraf.

[1] Stiffe, A. W. (5).

[2] D'Herbelot, vol. iii, p. 325.

[3] See Sykes (6), vol. i, p. 137 f.

The history of medieval Siraf, which most concerns our story, is rich in circumstantial details which have come down to us from successive Moslem authors. For a period of some three or four centuries it was the principal port of Fars and held proud place as the chief emporium of the Persian Gulf. First mention is made of it, as we have seen in Chapter V, by Sulaiman the Merchant and by Abu Zaid the Sirafian, in the ninth century. Istakhri (tenth century) is the next writer who gives a detailed description of the town. He says:

'The most important town of the district of Ardashir, after Shiraz, is Siraf, which is almost as large as Shiraz; its houses are of teak wood, or of other wood from Zanzibar; they have several stories. The town is situated on the sea coast, is covered with fine edifices and is very populous. The inhabitants take such great pride in the elegance of their houses that some spend 30,000 dinars in constructing a house and surrounding it with gardens. The best water, both for irrigation and drinking purposes, as well as the best fruits, come from a mountain named Hum (or Jamm [1]) which dominates the town and is the culminating height in this latitude. Siraf is the hottest town in the country. The imports are aloes wood (for burning), amber, camphor, precious gems, bamboos, ivory, ebony, paper, sandal wood, and all kinds of Indian perfumes, drugs and condiments. In the town itself excellent napkins are made, also linen veils, and it was a great market for pearls.'

Ibn Hawqal gives much the same description, deriving his information from Istakhri, but adds some details of interest, telling us, among other things, that: 'Here there is not any husbandry or cultivation of the ground; and they bring water from a distance. Siraf has three pulpits and oratories. There are not any trees immediately about Siraf; and the inhabitants devote their whole time to commerce and merchandise.' From Hawqal's account we gather that the place was given over wholly to trade, and indeed there could have been little scope for husbandry, available space for such, between shore and mountains, being very restricted. Muqaddasi (tenth century) tells us that, commercially, Siraf was the rival of Basra (see p. 68), that its houses were the finest he had ever seen, but that by his time it had been in part ruined by an earthquake lasting seven days, which occurred about the year 977.

With the fall of the Buyid or Daylamite dynasty, about A. D.

[1] When the writer was travelling in July 1911 from Tahiri to Jamm, the only caravans he met were carrying fruit from Jamm. On the hillside, just below the top of the pass, stand a number of ruined houses of European appearance, said to have been used by the Portuguese as a summer resort in the days of their supremacy.

1055, the city began to decay. Ibn al Balkhi, writing in the twelfth century, gives the reasons for its decline in such clearness of detail that he is worth quoting in full. He says:

'Siraf in old times was a great city, very populous and full of merchandise, being the port of call for caravans and ships. Thus in the days of the (Abbasid) Caliphs it was a great emporium, for here might be found stores of attar and aromatics such as camphor, aloes, sandalwood and the like. (For its merchants) immense sums of money were to be gained here, and so matters continued till the last days of the Buyid supremacy. Then, however, the ancestors of the present Amir Kaysh [1] attained to power, and they got into their possession the island of Qais with the neighbouring islands, whereby the revenue that had formerly been taken by Siraf was cut off and fell into the hands of the Amir Kaysh. Further, the Atabeg Rukn ad Dawlah Khumartagin (when he had first been appointed governor of Fars) lacked power and statesmanship to provide a remedy for this state of affairs. None the less he did truly on one or two occasions proceed to Siraf with a view of building ships of war that should invade the island of Qais and the other isles, but each time that he did so the Amir Kaysh sent presents to him and gave bribes to those persons who were about him, so that they dissuaded him from accomplishing his project. Next it came to pass that a certain one of the khans (of Qais Island), named Abul Qasim, succeeded finally in getting possession of Siraf also, and then every year or two (Khumartagin) would dispatch an army thither with great effort (to make him evacuate Siraf), but he could accomplish nothing against him. Thus, therefore, as matters now stood, no merchant would bring his ship into the port of Siraf to refit, nor for shelter would any anchor there on the voyage to Kirman from Mahruban or Dawraq or Basra, wherefore no goods but leatherware and pots, and things that the people of Fars alone have need of, now passed by the road of Siraf, and thus the town fell to complete ruin.' [2]

This account suggests the middle of the eleventh century as the date of its decline. At all events, by Yaqut's time (early thirteenth century) its ruin appears to have been complete, for he states: [3] 'I have visited it and seen the remains of remarkable edifices as well as of a fine mosque adorned with columns of teak wood. . . . But since the island of Qais ben Umaira has been colonized, and has become the entrepôt of Indian trade, Siraf has lost its ancient splendour; I saw there only some very poor families who retained the love of their native soil.' Yaqut, further, implies polite disbelief on his part of the description of the splendour of Siraf given by writers who had preceded him: 'Without wishing', he says, 'to contradict Istakhri's account, I would observe that

[1] 'Kaysh' appears to have been the family name of the Amir of Qais Island.
[2] Ibn al Balkhi (2).
[3] *Mujam al Buldan.*

Siraf is so cramped between the sea and the mountains, that there is between them only an arrow shot; it is thus difficult to accept the truth of his statement.' It must be admitted that there seems some justice in Yaqut's criticisms of the size and opulence of the city.

Ibn Batuta's description is misleading, for, strange to say, he confuses Qais and Siraf, and he adds nothing new to our knowledge. Mustawfi, his contemporary, writes the final epitaph of the dead city in the following words: 'In former days this was a large city, and very rich, being the emporium of sea trade (in the Persian Gulf); but during the Buyid supremacy the trade by sea was transferred to the emporium of Qais.'

According to Ibn al Balkhi, the total revenue of Fars, Kirman, and Oman, in regard to the yearly receipts from customs, amounted, in the reign of the Caliph Muqtadir (908–32), to 2,331,880 red gold dinars. And of this total: 'Fars with its dependencies, excluding the Siraf customs, paid in 1,634,500 dinars, while Siraf, with the one-tenth levied on the sea-ships, paid 253,000 dinars.' [1]

In the province of Fars of the Middle Ages, all the roads radiated from Shiraz. The high roads leading to the coast went severally down to Siraf, Qais, and Hormuz, as each in turn became the chief port of the Persian Gulf. The Siraf road went then, as now, 66 leagues in ten stages, via Khafr, Kavar, Khunuyfqan, Firuzabad, Simakan, Habrak, Qarzin, Laghir, and Kuran.

Qais, from causes described above by Ibn al Balkhi, succeeded Siraf as the chief centre of trade activity in the Persian Gulf. The island ($8\frac{1}{2}$ by $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles) is separated from the mainland by a fine navigable strait nine miles wide, and rises gradually from a rocky shore to a height of about 120 feet above sea-level. The old city of Qais was situated near the middle of the north coast; its site is marked by extensive ruins known as Harira, which extend for half a mile along the shore and consist chiefly of mere mounds of stone and blocks of masonry, and the ground is strewn with fragments of pottery and Chinese porcelain. Some remains of an old mosque still exist, the octagonal pillars of which, of cut stone, lie around just as they fell. There are also great oblong ruined cisterns for the storage of rain water, which were once roofed in; two of these measure 150 by 40 feet and 24 feet in depth, and were lined with masonry and cemented. Water for the irrigation of

[1] Ibn al Balkhi (2).

the fields was conducted in the usual Persian manner by means of *kanat*.[1]

It seems remarkable that the town should have flourished as much as it did, for there is no sheltered harbour in the island, the anchorages being open to one or other of the prevailing winds. Stiffe suggests that vessels were probably hauled up on the beach, or inside the reef; or that, in certain seasons, they may have anchored off the north-east point, which affords safe anchorage, except when the winter easterly gales blow.

Of the early history of Qais Island little is known, but it was consecrated to Venus and Mercury in the time of Alexander, when Nearchus with the Grecian fleet cast anchor here, for the island of *Kataia*, of Arrian, is none other than the modern Qais. A Persian legend is cited by Sir William Ouseley[2] in explanation of the origin of the name, and may here be given:

'Admitting the authority of a Persian manuscript, we may assign its name to the tenth century, when one Keis, the son of a poor widow, in Siraf, embarked for India, with his sole property, a cat. There he fortunately arrived at a time when the place was so infested by mice or rats, that they invaded the king's food, and persons were employed to drive them from the royal banquet. Keis produced his cat, the noxious animals soon disappeared, and magnificent rewards were bestowed on the adventurer of Siraf, who returned to that city and, afterwards, with his mother and brothers, settled in the island, "which, from him, has been denominated Keis, or, according to the Persians, Keish".'[3]

One of the earliest references to the island by the Moslem authors is by Ibn Khurdadhbih, who says: 'it is four farsangs in length and breadth, where there are found palms, cultivated fields and flocks and herds, and where there is fishing for pearls, held in high esteem'. From this and later descriptions of the island it may be inferred that it was formerly much more fertile than it is now, and indeed it must needs have been so to have supported its numerous population. A traveller at the end of the nineteenth century writes: 'There is some cultivation especially on the north coast, with scattered small plantations of date and other fruit trees.... The interior of the island is rocky and barren, sparsely grown with stunted shrubs and herbage, on which the flocks feed.'[4]

A great walled city was built in Qais Island, and ships from

[1] Stiffe (6). [2] Ouseley, vol. i, p. 169 f.

[3] Morier (1), p. 51, gives another version. The story bears a strong resemblance to the favourite nursery tale of our own Whittington. [4] Stiffe (6).

India and Arabia crowded the port, we are told by the old writers. Qazvini informs us that the heat was greater than the hottest room in the bath (*hammam*), but that, none the less, Qais was a very populous town. The island lay about four leagues from the mainland, where the ancient port of embarkation was Huzu, to which in the Middle Ages a caravan road came down from Shiraz by way of Laghir. Huzu, when Yaqut wrote in the thirteenth century, was much ruined, but in the tenth century had a stronghold which the Buyids made their state prison.

Idrisi (latter half of the twelfth century) corroborates many of these details and contributes some further facts towards its fragmentary history.

'Qais', he says, 'is square in shape, twelve miles in length and breadth, and has a town also called Qais, which a certain governor of Yemen seized. He fortified it, peopled it and fitted it with a fleet by the aid of which he made himself the master of the Yemen (i. e. Arabian) littoral. This man did much harm to travellers and traders, despoiled each of his property, and enfeebled the country to such a degree that the commerce was diverted from Oman to Aden. With his fleet, he ravaged the coast of Zanj and Ghamran. The people of India dread him and only resist him by the aid of ships known as *meshiat*, which, although made of a single piece of wood, are capable of carrying up to 200 men.[1] A contemporary traveller reports that: "The governor of Qais possesses fifty such vessels constructed of one piece, without counting many others which are made of several pieces. This man carries on his depredatory expeditions at the present time; he is very rich and no one is strong enough to resist him. At Qais are found cultivated fields, cattle, sheep, vines and pearl fisheries. It is two days by sea from Sohar and is a dependency of Yemen and Muscat."'

The Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela (A.D. 1164–73) visited the island on his way to India and Ceylon, and gives a quaint, though not a very intelligible account of it. Being a merchant rather than a geographer, he lays special stress upon the trading aspects of the place. He says:

'From thence (Kazvin) I returned to the country of Khuzistan, which lies on the Tigris, this river runs downward and falls into the Indian sea (Persian Gulf) in the vicinity of an island called Kish. The extent of this island is six miles and the inhabitants do not carry on any agriculture, principally because they have no rivers, nor more than one spring in the whole island and are consequently obliged to drink rain-water. It is, however, a considerable market, being the point, to which the Indian merchants

[1] 'Large canoes, carrying about thirty men, are at the present day in use at some places on the Arab coast' (Stiffe).

and those of the islands bring their commodities; while the traders of Mesopotamia, Yemen and Persia import all sort of silk and purple cloths, flax, cotton, hemp, mash,[1] wheat, barley, millet, rye and all other sorts of comestibles and pulse, which articles form objects of exchange; those from India import great quantities of spices and the inhabitants of the islands live by what they gain in their capacity of brokers of both parties. The island contains about five hundred Jews.'[2]

Benjamin of Tudela collected his information probably at the period of its greatest splendour. The description he gives of the barter carried on is doubtless as correct as it is concise, and throws much light on the history of the commercial intercourse between Qais and India. Marco Polo (latter half of the thirteenth century) merely mentions the island as a station at which travellers touch before they proceed to sea.

Yaqut, inasmuch as he visited both Qais and Siraf in the early part of the thirteenth century, is able for this reason to draw a valuable comparison between the condition of the two places in his day. He says:

'Kish, the Persian name of the island of Qais, is four farsangs in circumference. The town of Qais (in the island of the same name) is fine and picturesque and surrounded by gardens and houses. It is the residence of the sovereign of Oman, whose authority extends all over this sea and is the stopping-place of ships which cross between India and Fars. There are numerous cisterns supplied by rain-water and fine well-stocked bazaars. The king of this country is held in respect by the sovereigns of India on account of his naval forces and riches. I have seen him several times; his features are Persian and he dresses similarly to the Daylam; he has a numerous suite, much property and magnificent Arab horses. In these parts the pearl fishery is carried on; all the neighbouring islands belong to the ruler of Qais. In this country I have met several persons who were well versed in law and literature.'

Ibn Mujavir,[3] in his *Tarikh Mustansiri*, devotes a whole chapter to the island of Qais and gives fuller information regarding its social life than is found in any other Arabic geography. He says:

'The island abounds in date trees and plantations of *qarazh*,[4] the property

[1] '*Māsh*, which is a sort of pea' (Lee's *Travels of Ibn Batutah*). One of the common Hindu pulses.

[2] Benjamin of Tudela (1), vol. i, pp. 136 f.; and (2), pp. 62 f.

[3] Jemal ud Din Abul Fath ibn Yaqub ad Dimishqi, to give him his full name, wrote a geographical treatise between the years A.D. 1226–42 which he dedicated to the Caliph Mansur Mustansir.

[4] A kind of acacia, the fruit of which is used in tanning, and probably represented at the present day by the hardy acacia called *ghaf*.

of the sultan. To obtain pure sweet water it is sufficient to make a hole in the sand with the hands. A subterranean canal, dug by the kings of an earlier period, runs through the prince's garden and is fed by water coming from springs and streams and fills the reservoirs and cisterns. The people of Qais eat fish pounded with dates. At meals, they use only the right hand: any one breaking bread with the left hand would be dishonoured. The houses, built of stone and plaster, are very high, rising sometimes to as many as seven storeys; and each has the appearance of a castle. . . . The people wear clothes made of stuffs from Mehdiye in Morocco; the loose ends of their turbans are very long. The prince of Qais has neither cavalry nor infantry; all the people of the island are mariners. The women dress in black. When a man marries and gives a dowry of one hundred dinars to his wife, the latter brings a like sum, and a deed is drawn up stating that the husband is debtor for the sum of two hundred dinars. At Qais the men are submissive to their wives and do nothing contrary to their wishes. But such an attitude does not conform to the Word of the Prophet, who said: " Consult them, but do just the opposite of what they say, for blessing is on him who opposes them." '

From Ibn Mujavir we also learn that, in his time, the revenues of Qais belonged to the Caliph of Baghdad, who kept a representative there; but the Sultan of Qais had the monopoly of the sale of earthen and bamboo vessels, ' no one else being allowed to buy or sell such '. According to our author, the island owes its name to Qais ibn Zubair.

Qais continued of importance throughout the thirteenth century. Zakaria Qazvini, who died A.D. 1275, states that the town was of pleasing appearance, with a castle and many gates, gardens, and various structures, ' so that it is one of the most delightful places in our time '; also that the island was still the resort of ships from Persia and Arabia for commercial purposes. Hamdallah Qazvini, a writer of the following century, describes it in similar terms.

Just as Qais had previously supplanted Siraf, so, in turn, Hormuz supplanted Qais and became the chief trading-centre of the Persian Gulf. When considering the history of the place which bore this name it is necessary to distinguish between Old Hormuz of the mainland, first mentioned by Nearchus, and Hormuz of the island of the same name. It was the latter which, under its native kings, had a reputation for magnificence and opulence which was perhaps not altogether deserved, at least according to present-day standards; but its very name has a charm for us which is due probably to its mention by Milton

and others,[1] who have immortalized an obscure settlement on a barren isle and rendered it a synonym for barbaric magnificence.

'There was not anything in the locality itself,' says Lord Curzon, 'beyond its situation at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and its possession of two good harbours, to recommend it as the site of a great city. . . . All supplies, even the daily provisions of life, were imported from the outside; and any one who visits the modern site, strewn though it be with ruins, will find it difficult to believe that it was once occupied by an urban population of 40,000 souls.'[2]

Old Hormuz lay at a distance of two post stages, or half a day's march, from the coast, at the head of a *khor* or creek called, according to Istakhri, Al Jir, 'by which, after one league, ships come up thereto from the sea'; and the ruins of the town, though in large part obliterated by long cultivation over the site, are still to be seen at a place now known as Minab. At the present day the creek makes an indifferent harbour, the bar being shallow, while the inner channel, which at its head degenerates into a mere ditch, cannot be used by native boats exceeding twenty tons burden, and at low water is impracticable even for these.

Already in the tenth century Old Hormuz was the seaport for the local trade of Kirman and Seistan; but it had no importance in the world's commerce: Idrisi, Istakhri, and Muqaddasi

[1] High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold.
MILTON.—*Paradise Lost*, Book II.

An Eastern saying runs—'Were the world a ring, Hormuz would be the jewel in it.' I have been unable to trace the origin of this saying, of which there appear to be numerous renderings. Herbert, in *Some Yeares Travaile*, calls it 'this universall Proverbe', which he cites first in Latin:

Si terrarum Orbis, quaqua patet, Annulus esset,
Illius Ormusium gemma, decusque foret.

His rendering into English being:

If all the World were but a Ring,
Ormuz the Diamond should bring.

Camoens, in *Os Lusiadas*, x. 103, makes poetic reference to Hormuz:

But see yon Gerum isle the tale unfold
Of mighty things which Time can make or mar;
For of Armuza-town yon shore upon,
The name and glory this her rival won.
(Burton's rendering.)

[2] Curzon (4), vol. ii, p. 415.

describe Old Hormuz as the chief market of Kirman. Indigo is mentioned as the important product of the district: other agricultural products in which the country round was rich were wine, wheat, barley, and rice, and of mineral products there were gold, silver, copper, iron, cinnabar, and salt. Its foundation is ascribed to Ardashir Papakan (A. D. 224–41), founder of the Sasanian dynasty, but it was only after the Moslem conquest that it attained prominence; from it horses were exported to India, and this was the case even as late as the fifteenth century. Marco Polo's references to Hormuz, which he describes as 'a great and noble city on the sea', are to the Hormuz on the mainland, and he gives a striking account of the business of the place, which he twice visited, in 1272 and 1293, coming down on the first occasion from the city of Kirman, and he particularly notes the export of horses to India. His reference to the breeding of horses in Persia at this period is of much interest. He says: 'In this country there is a great supply of fine horses; and people take them to India for sale, for they are horses of great price, a single one being worth as much as is equal to 200 *livres Tournois*;[1] some will be more, some less, according to the quality. Here also are the finest asses in the world . . . for they are very large and fast, and acquire a capital amble. Dealers carry their horses to Kisi and Curmosa, two cities on the shores of the Sea of India, and there they meet with merchants who take the horses on to India for sale.'

Polo's description of the social manners and customs, as well as the commercial activities prevailing at Old Hormuz in his time, is of so much interest that it is worth quoting in full. He says:

'When you have ridden these two days (i. e. from the plain of Formosa)[2] you come to the Ocean Sea, and on the shore you find a city with a harbour which is called Hormos. Merchants come thither from India, with ships loaded with spicery and precious stones, pearls, cloths of silk and gold, elephant's teeth, and many other wares, which they sell to the merchants of Hormos, and which these in turn carry all over the world to dispose of again. In fact, it is a city of immense trade. There are plenty of towns and villages under it, but it is the capital. The King is called Ruomedam Ahomet. It is a very sickly place, and the heat of the sun is tremendous. If any foreign merchant dies there, the King takes all his property.

[1] In his time, equivalent to a little over 18 francs of modern French silver (Yule).

[2] Described as a beautiful plain in Kirman, extending for two days' journey, in which were 'fine streams of water with plenty of date palms and other fruit trees', where were 'also many beautiful birds, francolins, popinjays, and other kinds such as we have none of in our country'.

'In this country they make a wine of dates mixed with spices, which is very good. . . . The people never eat meat and wheaten bread except when they are ill, and if they take such food when they are in health it makes them ill. Their food when in health consists of dates and salt-fish (tunny, to wit) and onions, and this kind of diet they maintain in order to preserve health.

'Their ships are wretched affairs, and many of them get lost; for they have no iron fastenings, and are only stitched together with twine made from the husk of the Indian nut. They beat this husk until it becomes like horse-hair, and from that they spin twine, and with this stitch the planks of the ships together. It keeps well, and is not corroded by the sea-water, but it will not stand well in a storm. The ships are not pitched, but are rubbed with fish-oil. They have one mast, one sail, and one rudder, and have no deck, but only a cover spread over the cargo when loaded. This cover consists of hides, and on the top of these hides they put the horses which they take to India for sale. They have no iron to make nails of, and for this reason, they use only wooden trenails in their shipbuilding, and then stitch the planks with twine as I have told you. Hence 'tis a perilous business to go a voyage in one of those ships, and many of them are lost, for in that Sea of India the storms are often terrible.

'The people are black, and are worshippers of Mahommet. The residents avoid living in the cities, for the heat in summer is so great that it would kill them. Hence they go out (to sleep) at their gardens in the country, where there are streams and plenty of water. For all that they would not escape but for one thing that I will mention. The fact is, you see, that in summer a wind often blows across the sands which encompass the plain, so intolerably hot that it would kill everybody, were it not that when they perceive that wind coming they plunge into water up to the neck, and so abide until the wind has ceased.[1]

'The people sow their wheat and barley and other corn in the month of November, and reap it in the month of March. The dates are not gathered till May, but otherwise there is no grass nor any other green thing, for the excessive heat dries up everything. When any one dies they make a great business of the mourning, for women mourn their husbands four years. During that time they mourn at least once a day, gathering together their kinsfolk and friends and neighbours for this purpose, and making a great weeping and wailing.'[2]

[1] To prove the great heat of this wind, Marco Polo relates how a force of 1,600 horse and 5,000 foot belonging to the King of Kirman, being caught by such a wind when bivouacking in a wilderness, every man of them was suffocated, 'so that not one survived to carry the tidings to their Lord'.

[2] Idrisi's description, written about a century earlier, bears out and supplements that of Marco Polo. He says: 'Hormuz is the principal market of Kirman and a large and well-built city. The climate being hot, the palm grows in abundance in its environs; cumin and indigo are also cultivated; this last is of such incomparable quality that it has become proverbial, and large quantities are exported. The people of Maun and Welasjird specialize in the cultivation of this plant and give so much

From about A. D. 1100 Old Hormuz had its own petty dynasty of Arab rulers, of which there is a full history by one of them, Turan Shah, and an abstract of this is given by Teixeira.[1] According to this history, the founder of the dynasty was Shah Muhammad Dirhem-Kub, an Arab chief who crossed the Gulf and established himself there. The date is not given, but it must have been before A. D. 1000, as Rukn ud Din Muhammad, who succeeded in 1246 (the first date given), was the twelfth of the line. These rulers appear to have been, at times, in dependence on the Atabegs of Fars and the princes of Kirman. It appears that during the reign of one Mir Bahdin Ayaz Sayfin, fifteenth king of the line, A. D. 1301, Old Hormuz was so severely and repeatedly harassed by raids of Tartar horsemen, that the king and his people abandoned their city on the mainland, and transferred themselves first to the island of Qishm and eventually to that of Jerun:[2] the Tartars 'broke into the kingdom of Kirman, and from thence to that of Hormuz. The wealth they there found tempted them to come so often that the inhabitants, no longer able to bear that oppression, left the mainland and went to the island Broct, by the Portuguese called Quixome.'[3]

So runs the story, according to Turan Shah; but it cannot be ascertained precisely what brought about the transference of the town from the comparatively hospitable mainland to the torrid barren island of Hormuz. Abul Fida (first half of the fourteenth century) says: 'A person who has visited it in our days has related that ancient Hormuz has been ruined by the incursions of the Tartars, and that the inhabitants have emigrated to an island called Zarun (Jerun), situated near the coast to the west of ancient Hormuz. A few individuals of the lower classes alone remained in ancient Hormuz.' But, as far as history tells us, the Mongols hardly touched the coast of Kirman.

care to it that it is a source of very considerable profit to them. Much sugar of the cane and candy sugar are made; barley forms the staple food of the people and is the principal agricultural product; the region produces excellent dates. Hormuz is built on the banks of a creek called Heiz, derived from the Persian Gulf. Vessels reach the town by this channel.'

[1] Teixeira, P. (1) and (2). See also Stevens, J.

[2] Or Zarun, the original name of the island of Hormuz.

[3] Henri Cordier summarizes the history of the Dynasty of Hormuz as follows: 'The Dynasty was founded about 1060 by a Yemen chief Mohammed Dirhem Ko, and remained subject to Kirman till 1249, when Rokn ed Din Mahmud Kalhati (1242–77) made himself independent. The immediate successors of Rokn ed Din were Saif ed Din Nazrat (1277–90), Masa'ud (1290–3), Bahad ed Din Ayaz Sayfin (1293–1311).' Note, Yule's *Marco Polo*, vol. i, p. 121.

Friar Odoric (*c.* 1330) gives the first detailed mention of the newly founded island city. According to his description, it was 'a city strongly fortified and abounding in costly wares, situated on an island five miles distant from the mainland, having no trees and no fresh water, unhealthy and incredibly hot'. The transfer of commercial activity from the mainland to the island appears to have been complete by the time of Ibn Batuta, who crossed thither from Oman (1355), for he expressly distinguishes between the Hormuz of the mainland and the new Hormuz on the island. Of the former he says:

'It (Old Hormuz) is a town situated on the shore of the sea and is also called Mughistan; the new town of Hormuz stands opposite the first, in the midst of the sea, and separated from it only by a channel three farsangs wide. We arrived at new Hormuz, which forms an island, the capital of which is Jerun. It is a large and fine city with a well provisioned market. It serves as an entrepôt to India and Sind; the products of India are conveyed from this town into the two Iraqs, Fars, and Khurasan. In this place the sultan resides. The island itself is a day's march in length;[1] the greater part consists of land of a saline character and of salt mountains, of a kind called *darani*. Of this latter they make vessels destined to serve as ornaments and lamp stands [pillars]. The natives live on fish and dates brought from Basra and Oman; they have a saying—"dates and fish are the food of kings". Drinking-water has a high value in this island, and there are artificial cisterns and reservoirs for collecting rain-water; they are situated at a certain distance from the town, and people go there with large leather bottles (*qirbad*), which they fill and carry on the back as far as the sea, then loading them on boats and bringing them to the town. I have, in fact, seen marvellous things near the door of the mosque, between this and the market, viz. the head of a fish as high as a hill, the eyes of which were as large as doors. A man could go into the head by one of the eyes and out by the other.'

Ayaz, the fifteenth king of Old Hormuz, became the first king of the new Hormuz. The original name of the island, Jerun, was changed by Ayaz to Hormuz, in remembrance of their native country, so it is said. After the establishment of the new town there followed a period of wars with the kings of Qais and Bahrain, resulting eventually in the maritime supremacy of Hormuz, for, about A.D. 1320, Qutb ud Din, the fourth king of the new line, took Qais and subdued Bahrain. The Abbé Raynal gives the following somewhat highly coloured description of the activities and social amenities of the newly established city:

'Hormuz became the capital of an empire which comprehended a considerable part of Arabia on one side, and Persia on the other. At the time

[1] Evidently an overestimate.

of the arrival of the foreign merchants, it afforded a more splendid and agreeable scene than any city in the East. Persons from all parts of the globe exchanged their commodities and transacted their business with an air of politeness and attention, which are seldom seen in other places of trade. The streets were covered with mats and in some places with carpets, and the linen awnings which were suspended from the tops of the houses, prevented any inconvenience from the heat of the sun. Indian cabinets inlaid with gilded vases or china filled with flowering shrubs, or aromatic plants, adorned their apartments. Camels laden with water were stationed in the public squares. Persian wines, perfumes, and all the delicacies of the table were furnished in the greatest abundance, and they had the music of the East in its highest perfection. In short, universal opulence, and extensive commerce, politeness in the men and gallantry in the women, united all their attentions to make this city the seat of pleasure.' [1]

For two hundred years the new city of Hormuz enjoyed a high degree of prosperity, and its sway extended along both sides of the Persian Gulf nearly to Basra. According to Teixeira's history of the kings of Hormuz—' It thrived exceedingly for the next two hundred years, so that it dominated the most part of Arabia, and much of Persia, and all the Persian Sea as far as Bacora. And so it lasted until its conquest by the Portuguese, whereupon it began to decline, by reason of the oppression and violence of the Portuguese Captain and his Officers, lying too far away from such as might have amended the same.' [2]

Varthema visited Hormuz in 1503, just prior to the coming of the Portuguese, and from his description we gather that the city was at that period at the height of its development and commercial prosperity. He says:

' Proceedying on our viage, we came to a citie named Ormus, very fayre. This is seconde to none in goodlye situation, and plentie of pearles: it is in an Ilande dystaunt from the continent twelue myles: It hath great scarcenesse of freshe water and corne, from other regions is brought thyther all victualles that nouryshe the inhabitauntes. Three dayes sayling from thence, are geathered those muscles which bring foorth the fayrest and byggest pearles: . . . There are seene sometyme almost three hundred shyppes, and other kynde of vessels, which come thyther from many places and countreys. The Soltan of the citie is a Mahumetan. There are aboue foure hundred merchauntes and factours remayning here continually, for the trafike of merchandies which come from diuers other regions, as silke,

[1] Raynal, T. G. F. ' This description has been characterized by J. B. Fraser as an exaggeration, but, nevertheless, accounts agree in averring that Hormuz was wealthy and populous before it fell into the hands, first, of the Portuguese, and then of the Persians ' (Low, vol. i, p. 33, n.).

[2] Teixeira, P. (2).

pearles, precious stones, spices, and suche lyke. They lyue with Ryse for the moste parte, for they haue none other corne.' [1]

For the most detailed description of conditions at Hormuz just prior to, and during the earlier years of, the occupation of the island by the Portuguese, we turn to an account of the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean written by the Portuguese traveller, Duarte Barbosa, about the year 1518.[2] 'The city', he says, 'is not so great as it is fair, with lofty stone and mortar houses with flat roofs and many windows . . . all built in such wise as to make the wind blow from the highest to the lowest storeys when they have need of it. . . . All ships which come to this city take in (salt) as ballast, for it is worth money at many places. The merchants of this isle and city are Persians and Arabs. The Persians . . . are tall and well-looking, and a fine and upstanding-folk, both men and women; they are stout and comfortable. They hold the creed of Mafamede [3] in great honour. . . . They are also musicians, and have instruments of divers kinds. The Arabs are blacker and swarthier than they.

'In this city are many merchants of substance, and many very great ships. It has a right good harbour where many sorts of goods are handled, which come hither from many lands, and from here they barter them in many parts of India.'

A most interesting sidelight is thrown by Barbosa upon the social amenities, dress, and customs obtaining at Hormuz in his day.

'The Moors of Ormus', he says, 'go well-clad in very white cotton shirts, very thin and long, and under these they wear cotton drawers. They also wear many rich silk garments, and others of camlet and scarlet in-grain. They are girt about with *almejares* (cummerbunds) in which they carry their daggers finely decorated with gold and silver according to the quality of the wearers. They also carry broad round bucklers covered with fine silk, and in their hands their Turkish bows painted in excellent colours (with silken bowstrings) which make very long shots. The bows are of varnished wood and of buffalo horn. They are very good archers, and their arrows well-made and sharp pointed. Others carry small axes and iron maces of divers shapes, excellently wrought in fine damascened work.

'These men are rich, polished and gallant; they give great care to their clothing and their food, which they have well-spiced, and everything in great plenty, *scilicet* flesh-meat, wheaten bread, very good rice, and divers conserves and fresh fruits, apples, pomegranates, peaches, great plenty of

[1] Varthema, L. (1).

[2] Barbosa, Duarte, vol. i, pp. 90–105.

[3] Muhammad the Prophet.

apricots, figs, almonds, grapes, melons, also radishes and divers salads and everything else that there is in Spain; dates of divers kinds, and fruits of other kinds not found in Spain. They drink wine of the grape in secret as it is forbidden by their law. The water they drink is mixed with a little mastich, and set in a cool place, and they employ many methods of cooling and keeping it cold.

'These noblemen and principal merchants take with them whithersoever they go, on roads, public places or streets, a page who carries by way of parade a keg of water, or a water bottle garnished with silver, which they have for parade and show, and for the needs of their luxurious way of living. All these Moors of position have country houses on the mainland whither they go to divert themselves mostly in the summer.

'The city of Ormus, notwithstanding that it is exceeding rich and well furnished with victuals of every kind, is yet very dear, for the reason that everything comes to it from outside; . . . save salt only. Even the water comes from outside, from the main and from the neighbouring isles for their drinking, in certain small boats which they call *teradas*.[1] And all open places are constantly full of all this food and wood (which also they bring from outside) in great abundance, and everything is sold by weight at fixed rates, with very strict regulation; and any person who gives short weight or departs from the fixed rate and the orders given to him, is punished with very great severity. Flesh they sell cooked, either boiled or roasted, by weight, and other articles of diet in the same way, and all properly set out and clean, so much so that many persons do not have their food prepared in their houses, but eat the food of the bazaars.'[2]

Duarte Barbosa asserts that Hormuz had its own coinage, but in this he was probably mistaken, for its rulers seem not to have enjoyed such a privilege.[3]

Ralph Fitch, merchant of London, and traveller, of whom we shall subsequently hear more, who found himself at Hormuz about the year 1583, some sixty years after Barbosa, still during the period of its prosperity under the Portuguese, gives a much more sober description. He says: 'it is the dryest Iland in the world: for there is nothing growing in it but onely Salt; for there is neither water, wood, or victuals, and all things necessary come out of Persia.' Yet, he says: 'in this Towne are merchants of all Nations, and many Moores and Gentiles. Here is a very great trade of all sorts of Spices, Drugs, Silke, cloth of Silke, fine Tapestrie of Persia, great store of Pearles which come from the

[1] Ibn Batuta used the word *tārrada* or *tarrīda* in the sense of a 'great ship', or dromond; but Barros and other European writers apply the term to shore-boats and even rowing boats. It is used in Iraq to-day for the smallest sort of canoe.

[2] Op. cit.

[3] Op. cit., foot-note, p. 99.

Isle of Baharim, and are the best Pearles of all others, and many Horses of Persia which serve all India.' [1]

Other writers,[2] too numerous to mention, have made the story of Hormuz their theme, and making all allowance for the play which some of them give to their imagination, this truly was a remarkable place, with a story all its own and almost unique of its kind. But the time was at hand for a new power to appear on the scene—the Portuguese, at that time (the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) the pioneer of maritime nations in Europe. In March 1506, sailed from Lisbon Affonso de Alboquerque, ambitious to establish an empire in the East, so, at this point in the history of the Persian Gulf, we close the chapter.

[1] Purchas, vol. ii, p. 1731.

[2] Nieuhoff; Whitelock (3) and (5); Stiffe (4) and (13); Fontanier (1); and Foster, W. (1). An interesting sidelight is also thrown on the activities of the island, especially in connexion with the Dutch, by a work, of which only a few copies are now extant, entitled *The Dutch Survay*, by W. C. (William Crosse), published in London in 1625.

VIII

THE COMING OF THE PORTUGUESE

'"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon" had served the Portuguese very well as a motto for acquisition; but in the contemptuous neglect by them of the arts of peace, and in the absence of any genius for colonization, it did not facilitate retention.'

CURZON, *Persia and the Persian Question.*

The First Phase.

BEFORE entering upon the details of this phase of Persian Gulf history it will be well to take a slight retrospect. On the passing away of the Roman Empire the Venetians carried on the most important commercial intercourse with other nations. After the fall of Constantinople, Venice secured the overlordship of Greece, which acquisition greatly increased the wealth and influence of the republic and left it without a rival in the waters of the Levant. The Venetians carried on at Constantinople an immense trade, especially in Eastern products, but the Byzantine emperor, growing jealous of their increasing power and wealth, caused them to be driven out of Constantinople and in their place assigned to Genoa and Pisa a portion of that town for purposes of trade. After being ejected from Constantinople, the Venetians turned their attention to Egypt, through which country they established a regular commerce with the East from the ports of Alexandria and Rosetta, and they soon succeeded in monopolizing the Eastern trade by sea. The Genoese, on their side, contributed in no small degree to a revival of the commerce of the Byzantine Empire and secured for themselves the *inland* caravan trade with the Far East. But the abuse of their privileges by the Genoese at length induced the Byzantine Government to call in the aid of the Venetians and Turks, by whom they were finally expelled; the power of Genoa in the East began to wane before that of Venice, who now became mistress of the Eastern trade.

Towards the close of the fifteenth century the commercial ascendancy of Venice began to decline, before the advance of the Turks, to whom the Venetians were obliged to yield their Oriental trading stations; and their various channels of intercourse with India were gradually and successively closed. After the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, the Venetians were left with only an intermittent trade with the Indies, through Alexandria and the Red Sea, which was subject to the caprice of

the Mameluke rulers of Egypt, and was also under the ban of the Pope.[1]

The final blow to the Eastern trade of Venice was struck by the discovery, by Portugal, of the Cape route to India, whereby Portuguese ships were enabled to bring home the products of the East far more cheaply than by the former route through Egypt. In A. D. 1486 Bartholomeu de Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope, but without realizing the fact; and in 1497 Vasco da Gama sailed from Lisbon, reaching India in 1498. He returned to Lisbon in 1499. This cruise was a momentous one in the history of the World, and, as far as Portugal in particular is concerned, paved the way to the formation of her empire in India and the East: an empire which extended over a period of four hundred eventful years. The discovery brought great prestige to Portugal, and thenceforth her kings styled themselves 'Lords of the Conquest, Navigation, and Commerce of India, Ethiopia, Arabia, and Persia', a title which was presently confirmed by the Pope.

Between the years 1481 and 1487, and previous to the discovery of Vasco da Gama, Dom João II had sent abroad various missions and expeditions in his desire to 'discover the lands whence spices were procured'. With one of these expeditions he charged João Peres de Covilhão (with whom was associated Affonso de Paiva); these men set out in 1487, proceeding by way of Barcelona, Naples, and Rhodes to Cairo, where they found a company of Moors going to Aden. Joining the caravan, they accompanied the Moors to Tor on the Red Sea, whence they sailed to Suakin and Aden. At Aden, Covilhão and Paiva parted company, and the former, embarking on a Moorish ship, reached Cannanore, whence he went on to Calicut. Here he saw a great quantity of ginger and pepper, which grew in the vicinity, and he learnt that cloves and cinnamon were brought thither from far countries. From Calicut he went to Goa, and then to the island of Hormuz, and having informed himself of the trade carried on at this busy port, took ship for Zeila on the Bab el Mandeb, whence he proceeded down the African coast as far as Sofala. Covilhão having thus gained first-hand knowledge of the character of the trade in Eastern waters, returned to Cairo, and dispatched to Dom João a full account of all the places he had visited and what he had seen. Later, he revisited Hormuz, returned to Aden, settled in Abyssinia, and disappears from our story.

[1] Danvers, F. C. (2).

It does not come within the scope of this work to give a comprehensive description of the history of the Portuguese Empire in India but, not altogether losing sight of the broader issues, rather to discuss those happenings which are more or less intimately associated with the Persian Gulf. Prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, the Arabs (of Oman and the Yemen) held the control of the Eastern sea-borne trade, a trade which had for several centuries so enriched all who had a share in it. It was this control which the Portuguese wrested from them and succeeded in holding for upwards of three centuries. Dom Francisco de Almeida, first Governor and Viceroy of the Portuguese Indian possessions from 1505, under King Dom Manoel I, contemplated only the establishment of factories in India for the maintenance of purely commercial relations with that country. These views were, however, not held by his successor, Affonso de Alboquerque, who sailed for the East for the second time in 1506 to supersede Almeida, having made an earlier voyage to Asia in 1503. Alboquerque's ambition was to found a great Portuguese empire in the East, and he attached considerable importance to the erection of forts wherever he founded a factory, not only for the protection of the trade on the shore, but to enable him to dominate the native rulers and to consolidate his power, with the object of coercing them into acknowledging Portugal as suzerain power. This principle, in close imitation of Alexander, guided all his actions.

The command of the fleet of fourteen vessels with which Alboquerque, as ' Chief Captain of five vessels ', sailed in 1506 was entrusted to Tristão da Cunha, who had instructions to proceed by way of the Cape to Socotra and there construct a fort which would serve as a depot for the use of the fleets destined to blockade the Red Sea against Egyptian and Venetian craft. On the completion of the fort, da Cunha was to proceed to India with a part of the fleet, leaving Alboquerque with a small garrison to attack Aden and Jidda and to harass the Moorish trade. Alboquerque carried with him secret instructions that at the expiration of three years he was to supersede Almeida as Governor of India. On the way out a violent storm separated the vessels, but they all met again at Mozambique with the exception of two, one of which in the command of Ruy Pereira, in its wanderings, first discovered the island of St. Lourenço (Madagascar). A difference having arisen between da Cunha and Alboquerque as to the objective of the expedition (the latter

a. VASCO DA GAMA

b. ALBOQUERQUE

contending that the fleet ought at once to proceed to Cape Gardafui and to erect the fort at Socotra), da Cunha placed the greater part of the fleet at Alboquerque's disposal, giving him supreme authority over the other captains, and allowed him to proceed on his intended voyage. The island of Socotra having been seized, da Cunha handed over six ships with men, supplies, and equipment to Alboquerque and himself sailed for India.

Alboquerque first turned his attention to the internal administration of the island, but perceiving the uselessness of Socotra for his purpose, and having forces too inadequate to attempt the capture of Aden as he had been instructed, sailed north-east (leaving Affonso de Noronha as Captain of the fort), intent upon the capture of Hormuz, then (as shown in the previous chapter) the chief emporium of the Persian Gulf, which, could he but seize it, would give him entire command of the Persian Gulf route and would be of greater service than the temporary blockade of the Red Sea. Leaving Socotra on the 10th August, the fleet passed the Kuria Muria Islands and in due course anchored off Ras al Hadd, where they found thirty or forty fishing ships[1] from Hormuz and other places on the coast; these they burnt. Proceeding north-westwards, they cast anchor opposite Kalhat (or Qalhat), an entrepôt of shipping from India and a dependency of the King of Hormuz. The inhabitants expressed their willingness to become tributary to Portugal, and Alboquerque took in supplies for his fleet, for all of which he insisted on paying.[2] Proceeding to Quryat he 'was ill received, and storming the Town, met with a Vigorous Opposition, but entered with the death of 80 of the Enemy, and loss of three Portugueses; after the Plunder, the Place was burnt, and with it fourteen Vessels that were in the Harbour. Hence he sailed eight Leagues farther to Mascate, a place stronger than any of the others, and well

[1] 'And they found there, . . . thirty or forty fishing ships, which come thither from the city of Ormuz, Calayate, and all that coast to fish for *bonitos* and *albeciras*; for there is a great traffic in these fish to many parts . . . and they burned all these ships, and on the following morning set sail with a fair wind, and took the ships' boats with masts and sails.' *The Commentaries.*

[2] To the demands of Alboquerque 'The Moors replied, that if he was on his way to Ormuz, this place was the door to it, and if he treated them well they would open it for him, and he could so enter the house, and since he was determined to go and visit the King of Ormuz, their Lord, he might take some agreement with him, but if no agreement were made, they would agree to be subject to the King of Portugal, and as his vassals they desired he would not destroy them or make war upon them.' *The Commentaries.*

manned with People, who resorted to it from all Parts, hearing the destruction of Quryat.'[1] On anchoring before Muscat, two 'Noble Moors' waited upon him as a deputation from the rulers of the city and implored him to do the city no injury; they expressed their willingness to become vassals of the King of Portugal, and to pay him the dues they had hitherto paid to the King of Hormuz.

Negotiations however came to naught, and Alboquerque, perceiving that the Moors were temporizing and organizing resistance and taking steps to defend themselves, ordered two of his ships to stand in to shore and bombard the town, preparatory to making an attack. The defenders resisted with great obstinacy but ultimately had to yield; they asked Alboquerque not to burn the town, to which he agreed provided they paid 10,000 *xerafins*[2] of gold before noon the next day. The money not being forthcoming, he caused the place to be set on fire together with the mosque and shipping in the harbour;[3] some men and women prisoners 'whom they did not expect to have any need of, and could not carry away', were set at liberty after having their ears and noses cut off. 'The Place was plundered, all except the Governours House, saved because he received our men friendly.'[4]

Some idea of the commercial importance and political status of Muscat (which the Portuguese thus wantonly destroyed) in the early years of the sixteenth century may be gathered from *The Commentaries*.

'Mascate is a large and very populous city, surrounded on the inner side with very large mountains, and on the sea-board it is close to the water's

[1] Faria y Sousa (2).

[2] A *xerafin* = 3 *tostoes*, each valued at 100 *reis*, ∴ 10,000 xerafins = 3,000,000 reis = 3,000 dollars = £625.

[3] The needless havoc wrought by the Portuguese is vividly described in *The Commentaries*, thus: 'When the appointed hour was passed, he ordered the city to be set on fire, wherein were burned many provisions, and thirty-four ships in all, large and small, many fishing barks, and an arsenal full of every requisite for ship-building; and he ordered three gunners with axes to cut the supports of the mosque, which was a very large and beautiful edifice, the greater part of it being built of timber finely carved, and the upper part of stucco. When the supports had been cut through, and the gunners were about to go out, the building came down all at once upon them, so that Affonso de Albuquerque gave them up for dead; but thanks to Our Lord, they came forth alive and sound, without a wound or a bruise, just as they stood when cutting the supports of the mosque. Our people were frightened, and when they saw them gave many thanks to Our Lord for that miracle which he had done for them, and set fire to the mosque, which was burned, so that nothing remained of it.'

[4] Faria y Sousa (2).

edge. . . . The harbour is small, shaped like a horseshoe, and sheltered from every wind; it is the principal entrepôt of the Kingdom of Ormuz, into which all the ships which navigate these parts must of necessity enter, to avoid the opposite coast, which contains many shallows. It is of old a market for carriage of horses and dates; is a very elegant town, with very fine houses, and supplied from the interior with much wheat, maize, barley, and dates, for lading as many vessels as come for them. This city of Mascate is part of the Kingdom of Ormuz, and the interior belongs to a King called the *Benjabar*, who had two brothers; between these (three) the land was divided, extending as far as Aden, and on the north reaching to the shore of the Persian sea, and from thence as far as the vicinity of Meca.'

After the sack of Muscat the Portuguese sailed for Sohar, which in those days had a large fortress requiring more than a thousand persons for its defence; nevertheless 'all the Inhabitants whereof fled, except the Governour, and some of the Principal Moors, who offered it up to Alboquerque, and received it back to hold for King Emanuel, paying the same Tribute he had given to him of Ormuz'. From Sohar the fleet proceeded to Khor Fakkan and, the inhabitants resisting, the town was pillaged and burnt, prisoners having their noses and ears cut off, as at Muscat.

The fleet then doubled Ras Musandam and proceeded direct to Hormuz, to which all the places previously mentioned were tributary, and anchored in front of the town. The Portuguese were at first taken aback at the formidable nature of the task which lay before them, for, 'Having doubled the point, when the Captains beheld the greatness of the city, and the number of mounted men who were assembled on the beach, and many ships in the harbour well manned and armed, they became dismayed, and in that state of mind came alongside of Affonso de Albuquerque's ship and desired him to be cautious what he was going to meddle with, for that city was not like those others which he had destroyed, as many soldiers could be noticed on shore.' [1]

The King of Hormuz, having been warned of the approach of the Portuguese, was fully prepared for an attack. According to Faria y Sousa:

'When Albuquerque arrived there, Ceyfadim (Saif ud Din), a youth of twelve years of age reigned, and over him his Slave Coje Atar,[2] a man subtil and couragious. Who hearing what had been done by Albuquerque, made preparations, laying an embargo upon all the ships in the Harbour, and hiring Troops from the Neighbouring Provinces, Persians, Arabians,

[1] *The Commentaries.*

[2] The principal governor of the city.

and others, so that when Albuquerque came, there were in the town 30,000 Fighting men among them 4,000 Persians, most expert Archers, and in the Harbour 400 Vessels, 60 of considerable bulk, with 2,500 men.'

Besides this force, the king had assembled in the harbour several large vessels [1] with many men and guns, besides about 200 galleons and a number of *teradas*, or shore boats,[2] full of small guns and archers.

Alboquerque called upon the king to become a vassal of the Crown of Portugal and, negotiations failing,[3] in spite of the apparently overwhelming forces opposing him and his captains disapproving of their leader's action, gave battle with his comparatively small fleet and gained a complete, but by no means easy, naval victory.[4] The king became a vassal of the Portuguese Crown and agreed to pay down 5,000 xerafins towards the expenses of the fleet and an annual tribute of 15,000 xerafins; and further came to a commercial arrangement that merchandise from Portugal should be free of duty, while that bought by the Portuguese in Hormuz and its vassal ports should not pay more duty than the natives paid. The Portuguese further asserted their supremacy in the most uncompromising way by forbidding any native vessel to trade in the Gulf without a pass. Thus were laid the beginnings of their naval supremacy and commercial activities in the Persian Gulf.

Peace being concluded, Alboquerque demanded a site at Hormuz on which to erect a fort, and having examined the various sites offered (Qishm, Turumbaque,[5] and Naband), selected the point of Morona on the island itself. He laid the foundations of the principal tower in October 1507 and hastened its construc-

[1] Including one of 1,000 tons, the *Meri*, belonging to the King of Cambaya.

[2] See note, p. 108.

[3] 'Sir Captain, the King of Ormuz hath heard thy message, and desireth to know of thee what thou wishest, and what thou comest to seek in this port?' Affonso Dalbuquerque answered him: 'Say to the King of Ormuz, that the King Dom Manoel, King of Portugal, and Lord of the Indies, desiring greatly his friendship, hath sent me to this his port to serve him with his fleet, and if the King be willing to become his vassal and pay him tribute, I will make peace with him and serve him in everything he shall command me against his enemies; but if he be unwilling, let him know that I shall surely destroy all this fleet wherein he placeth his trust, and take his city by force of arms.' *The Commentaries.*

[4] 'This battle which our men had with the Moors on sea, lasted from seven o'clock in the morning until three in the afternoon, and in it there perished an infinite number of Moors, and our gunners so managed that day (for Our Lord was thus pleased to help them) that there was not a single shot fired that did not send a ship to the bottom and put many men to death.' *The Commentaries.*

[5] One league from Hormuz.

a. CITY OF HORMUZ FROM AN OLD PRINT

b. PORTUGUESE CARAVEL OF THE 16TH CENTURY

tion, ' for his intention was, as soon as January was come, to go and take a view of the Red Sea, and he wanted this tower finished up to the first story, that within it the Portuguese might defend themselves . . . until his return to Ormuz '; he further established a factory in the city, to which he sent divers kinds of merchandise in order to open trade with the ' Moors ', giving instructions that all goods should be sold cheaply, so as to gain the good will of the people.

Shah Ismail, of Persia, now demanding of the King of Hormuz the tribute which he was obliged to render to him every year, the latter appealed to Alboquerque to tell him what he should do. Alboquerque's reply was ' that the Kingdom of Ormuz belonged to the King of Portugal, gained by his fleet and his men, and that he might know of a certainty that if any tribute should be paid to any other King, except the King Dom Manoel, his lord, he would take the government of the Kingdom and give it to some one who would not be afraid of Xeque (Shah) Ismael.' He then sent to the ships for cannon-balls, guns, matchlocks, and grenades, and told the messenger to say to the king ' that he might send all these to the captain of Xeque Ismael, for this was the sort of money wherewith the King of Portugal had ordered his captain to pay the tribute of that Kingdom that was under his mastery and command; he, for his part, would promise him that as soon as the fortress was completed, he would enter the Persian straits and render tributary to the King of Portugal, his master, all the places which the Xeque Ismael held on that shore, and when he got there they might demand the tribute due from the King of Ormuz; for he would pay them in very good money.' [1]

In 1508, the Portuguese fleet still being at Hormuz, discontent, which resulted at last in open mutiny of the commanders of certain ships (some of whom descended so far as to intrigue with the native governor of the city), made Alboquerque's position at Hormuz untenable, and necessitated his abandoning his ' conquest ' for the time being. The contention of the disaffected captains was ' that it would be of more service to the King (of Portugal) to make their way to Cape Gardafum, and lie in wait for the ships coming from India, with spices for the Straits, than to stay building a fortress, which, as soon as it was left, would be taken by the Moors '. So, accompanied by the captains who had remained loyal, Alboquerque departed, and eventually, in 1508,

[1] *The Commentaries.*

sailed for India, by way of Sohar and Socotra.[1] The disaffected captains sailed for India also, where they made depositions against Alboquerque to the Viceroy, who caused an inquiry to be made in the matter. Thus ended the first endeavour of the Portuguese to establish a political footing in the Persian Gulf.

Alboquerque assumed the office of Captain-General and Governor of India on the departure of the Viceroy Almeida in November 1509, the latter at first refusing to hand over the reins of government. Among the early events of his governorship was the loss to the Portuguese of Goa and its recapture, on which he determined to make it the principal seat of the government of Portuguese India, setting to work at once to put it into a proper state of defence.

As time went on, Alboquerque perceived that his position in India could not be made satisfactory until his line of communications had been strengthened. In a letter to Dom Manoel in 1512, he said: 'the greatest of all evils to Goa is, however, the persistent and constant report that " the Rumes [2] are coming ". It is a great source of danger to India, and causes much disquiet and uneasiness among the natives and Christians alike. As regards these damaging remarks, I would respectfully submit to your Majesty that until we go to the Red Sea, and assure these people that such beings as the Rumes are not in existence, there can be no confidence or peace for your Majesty's subjects in these parts.' Soon after dispatching this letter, he set out from Goa with his entire fleet towards the West (for Aden and Mecca), without however, owing to stress of weather, accomplishing more than the dismantling of the fortress of Socotra, which had proved quite useless, and the collection of the tribute due from Hormuz.

In February 1513, Alboquerque (having received urgent orders from Dom Manoel to endeavour to capture Aden and make his

[1] On his way from Socotra to India, Alboquerque again visited Kalhat (where on his first visit he had been well received), and his summons to Sharaf ud Din, the chief of that place, to appear before him, being ignored, he sacked and burnt the town and the shipping in the harbour. Then, hearing that Hormuz was in straits for want of provisions and water, he proceeded thither and took advantage of this opportunity to demand payment of the tribute now overdue. Finding himself unable, however, to uphold his demands, and 'being but ill-assisted by the Viceroy', he deemed it advisable to take no further action for the time being, and set course for India.

[2] 'The Turks of Romania . . . pretended to be descendants of the Roman conquerors, and obtained from the Indians the name of 'Rumes' or Romans.' Note, *The Commentaries*.

way into the Straits of the Red Sea), with a fleet of twenty ships carrying a force of about 1,700 Portuguese and 800 Malabaris and Canarese, set sail again from Goa, shaping their course direct for Cape Gardafui, whence in due course they made for Aden. The attack on Aden ended in failure, to the great disappointment of Alboquerque, who held that for the preservation of the Portuguese Empire in India three things were necessary: (*a*) the capture and retention of Aden, in order to have dominion over the 'Straits of Méca'; [1] (*b*) the retention of Hormuz, so as to have supreme rule over the 'Straits of Bussora'; (*c*) Diu and Goa, for maintaining sovereignty of all the other districts of India. The Portuguese succeeded only in setting fire to the shipping in Aden harbour, after they had taken from them the rigging and tackle necessary for refitting their own vessels. This done, the fleet set forward for the Red Sea, but got no farther than Kamaran, where it was detained by adverse winds, and then returned to Diu, making a second abortive attempt on Aden on the way back. During the period of enforced inactivity at Kamaran, Alboquerque had availed himself of the opportunity of collecting all the information he could obtain regarding the regions about the entrance of the Red Sea, and he visited and explored the island of Perim.

On Alboquerque's return to India he received an ambassador from Shah Ismail, who was anxious to gain his friendship. Receiving disquieting news of the movements of the Shaikh of Aden and intelligence of the death of the native governor of Hormuz, who, during his lifetime, had strenuously opposed the erection by the Portuguese of a fortress in the island, he determined on sending thither another expedition, and placed it under the command of his nephew Pero. During the summer of 1513, Pero cruised about in the neighbourhood of Socotra, capturing many Arab vessels bound for the Red Sea, and arrived at Hormuz in May of 1514. He achieved little, as a result of his negotiations, towards the surrender of the fortress by the king or the payment of the overdue tribute.[2] The King of Hormuz had, in fact, recognized the suzerainty of Shah Ismail. Pero returned to Goa in September 1514 to report to his uncle.

[1] This appears to be an error for 'Mokha', now called the Strait of Bab el Mandeb. By other authorities, considered to signify the Red Sea.

[2] Fearing that Alboquerque might set fire to the shipping in the harbour, the king sent 10,000 xerafins on account, excusing himself for not sending more because of the poverty of his merchants, who, he averred, 'dared not make their voyages for fear of the Portuguese fleet'. *The Commentaries.*

In consequence of this intelligence Alboquerque determined to proceed himself to Hormuz, as speedily as possible, and lost no time in making preparations, giving it out that he contemplated an expedition to the 'Straits of Méca'. In a letter to Dom Manoel of the 20th October, which bears evidence of his political sagacity and breadth of outlook, he thus describes the position of affairs in the Red Sea at the time:

'Aden should be captured and held by means of a fortress. There is a good harbour there capable of affording ample shelter to our ships when wintering there. A fortress at the gates of the Strait is out of the question, as there is no water there, but as Aden is only three days' run from these gates, I consider it the key to the Straits. . . . As regards the island of Kamaran, I hear that either the Rumes or the Skeikh of Aden is erecting a fortress there. This is not of much consequence, as we have another one nearer Jidda, called Farsan. . . . Our first step should be to make ourselves secure at Massawa, in order to be assured of provisions and supplies.'

In a subsequent letter he further announced to Dom Manoel:

'It is my intention to proceed to Massawa, a port of Prester John, to capture Dalaka, and see what I can do at Jidda; albeit that other matters for the sake of trade call me to Hormuz. The voyage to the Red Sea will, however, be a profitable one on account of the valuable spices which come every year to those parts from India; and because I wish to exterminate the Rumes and, after opening relations with Prester John, destroy Mecca. For these reasons I have determined on going to the Red Sea first, and destroy the power of the Soldan [1] in those waters.'

Having seen that affairs in India were in a satisfactory state, Alboquerque sailed in February 1515 with a fleet of twenty-six ships, having about 1,500 Portuguese and 700 Malabaris on board. Before starting, it had been a matter of serious consideration whether the fleet should first proceed to Aden or to Hormuz; eventually the idea of going to Aden was abandoned for the time being, matters at Hormuz seeming the more pressing, inasmuch as the then reigning king of the island (Saif ud Din) was merely a 'creature' of Shah Ismail, who, it was feared, might at any time reacquire possession of Hormuz, to the effective exclusion of the Portuguese. The fleet arrived off Quryat and proceeded to Muscat, where Alboquerque learned that Hormuz was in a state of revolution and the king held prisoner by one Rais Hamed; he accordingly hastened thither. No naval or military action, however, was necessary for its recovery. Arriving at the port, Alboquerque saluted the city with a salvo of artillery, which so

[1] The Grand Soldan of Cairo.

alarmed Rais Hamed that he at once set the king at liberty; and, after much parleying with the latter, the fortress was handed over and reoccupied, and the Portuguese flag hoisted over the royal palace. Subsequently an ambassador from Shah Ismail arrived, and a definite agreement between the Portuguese and Persians was entered into,[1] whereby the king was to be ruler of Hormuz 'in the name of King Dom Manoel, his lord'. To all intents and purposes, the Portuguese now ruled at Hormuz.

Alboquerque appointed his nephew Pero to be captain of the fortress, to whom he gave comprehensive instructions regarding its completion and arming, and, having set the general affairs of Hormuz in order, he sailed for India in the *Flor da Rosa*, in a state of ill-health. His illness increased daily, and he arrived at Goa only to die, soon after his ship cast anchor in the harbour, the 15th December 1515. His last letter to his king, dated 'At Sea', runs as follows: 'This letter to your Majesty is not written by my hand, as when I write I am troubled with hiccoughs, which is a sign of approaching death. I have here a son to whom I bequeath the little I possess. Events in India will speak for themselves as well as for me. I leave the chief place in India in your Majesty's power, the only thing left to be done being the closing of the gates of the Straits. I beg your Majesty to remember all I have done for India and to make my son great for my sake.'

Thus, before the full realization of his great projects, died the able administrator who laid the foundations of the first European empire to be established in Asia, whose strength of character is shown by the persistent manner in which he overcame opposition to his schemes for developing the power of Portugal and acquiring a monopoly of the Eastern trade, but whose fierce and relentless treatment of his enemies was destined to contribute powerfully to the eventual destruction of the empire he founded.[2]

[1] Among the terms of this agreement were: (*a*) that the Portuguese shipping should be available to enable the Persians to invade Bahrain and Qatif; (*b*) that Shah Ismail should have the help of the Portuguese in suppressing a rebellion in Makran; and (*c*) that the two peoples should make an alliance against the Turks.

[2] Faria y Sousa (2) draws a quaint and interesting sketch of this remarkable figure: 'Of a moderate Stature, his countenance pleasing, and venerable by the Beard which reached below his Girdle, to which he wore it knotted; that and his complexion very White; his Picture shows his Breeches, Doublet, Cloak, Cap and Coif all Black, with Gold Trimming; the Waistcoat striped with Green Velvet, with small spots like Studs. It was doubted whether he was a better Man or Officer. When angry his looks somewhat Terrible; when Merry, Pleasant and Witty. He

The Second Phase.

Alboquerque was succeeded by Lopo Soarez as Viceroy, a man of totally different character, who 'being arrived at Cochin, by his (perhaps rather affected than natural) reservedness, became disagreeable to many, particularly to the King, who was used to Alboquerque's discreet civility'.[1] Thenceforward, Portuguese policy in the East changed, for, 'till this time the Gentlemen had followed the Dictates of true Honor, esteeming their Arms the greatest Riches; from this time forwards they so wholly gave up themselves to trading, that those who had been Captains became Merchants, so that what had been Command became a Shame, Honor was a Scandal, and Reputation a Reproach. Lopo Soarez entred upon the Government. He visited the Forts, placed in them New Captains, gave out Orders and such other Affairs of small moment, which rather serve to fill Paper than increase the Substance of History.'[2]

Throughout the sixteenth century, the Portuguese held supreme, though not unchallenged, control in Persian Gulf waters. Hormuz, by virtue of its commanding situation at the mouth of the Gulf, continued to hold central place in their activities in this part of their Eastern empire. All Portuguese trade with Basra and the other ports of the Gulf, including Muscat, flowed through it. But though their material hold upon the island was tightened as the sixteenth century advanced, its commerce and importance slowly but steadily declined, even from the date of its conquest by Alboquerque, chiefly owing to the rapacity of its successive governors or commanders. The succession of the native kings, whose power soon became merely nominal, was preserved during the Portuguese occupation of the island; but they were forced to take the oath of fidelity to the King of Portugal, and could not quit the island without the consent of the Portuguese governor. In the middle of the century, the Turks endeavoured to challenge Portuguese supremacy in the Gulf—as indeed also in Indian waters—but without success.

The outstanding incidents connected with the Portuguese, in the Gulf history, during the sixteenth century were as follows: In 1516 Soarez sailed from Goa for the Red Sea to find the fleet of the Soldan, who, he was informed, was preparing to attack the Portuguese possessions in India. Arrived at Aden, the com-

was twice before Ormuz, twice before Goa, and twice before Malaca, those Famous Islands and Kingdoms in Asia, whereof he gloriously triumphed.'

[1] Faria y Sousa (2). [2] *Idem.*

mander of the city, finding himself defenceless, offered him the keys of the citadel. This offer Soarez unwisely refused, reserving the taking of the city to what he thought would be a more convenient day, and he went as far as Jidda without finding the Soldan's ships. When returning, he captured Zeila and set sail again, intending to take possession of Aden; but in the meanwhile the forts had been repaired and manned. Soarez therefore left for Berbera, but a storm scattered his fleet, many vessels were lost, and the expedition ended disastrously. Somewhat later it was necessary to send reinforcements to Hormuz, where disturbances took place in consequence of the Portuguese attempting to seize the customs.

The control of the Hormuz customs soon became a question of first-rate importance. It appears that, in 1522, under orders from Dom Manoel, Portuguese officials were definitely placed in charge of the customs at Hormuz, who, by their overbearing conduct, brought about a revolt, which broke out simultaneously at Hormuz, Bahrain, Muscat, Quryat, and Sohar, all of which places were suddenly attacked one night both by land and sea, by order of the King of Hormuz, and many of their defenders killed. The King of Hormuz hoped thus to throw off the Portuguese yoke. The Portuguese fort at Hormuz was closely besieged, but, reinforcements arriving from Muscat, the king, despairing of effecting his object and fearing the punishment of his revolt, set fire to the city, 'which was four Days and Nights burning', and fled to the island of Qishm where, soon after, he was murdered by his own people. His son Mahmud Shah, a youth of thirteen years, became ruler in his stead.

A fresh treaty between the new king and the Portuguese (represented by Dom Duarte de Menzes) was concluded in July 1523, at Mina on the river Minab, which, after citing the fact that, by virtue of a previous treaty made with Alboquerque, the father of the present king had undertaken to hand over the city and kingdom of Hormuz to Portugal whenever the King of Portugal so willed, now declared the kingdom to be delivered up.

This agreement—by which the hold of the Portuguese on Hormuz was tightened—being signed, de Menzes induced the young king to return to Hormuz to reside, and after making great personal profit out of the trade which came to that port, returned to India in 1524 only to find that he had been replaced as governor by Dom Vasco da Gama.

In 1526 fresh native risings at Kalhat and Muscat against

Portuguese oppression, instigated by one Rais Sharafin, were suppressed by Lopo Vaz, then governor of India, who sailed thither with a fleet.[1]

In 1528 Nuno da Cunha, appointed to succeed Lopo Vaz as Viceroy, left Lisbon for the East, and in order to acquaint himself with the general state of affairs he set out to visit the places where there were Portuguese settlements, including Hormuz. Whilst he was at Hormuz in 1529 Tavarez de Sousa arrived there from Basra,[2] whither he had gone to assist the king of that place against the chief of the island of Gezaira (probably Jazirat ul Khidhr, or Abadan). This was the first expedition of the Portuguese to the head of the Gulf. The King of Basra refusing to deliver up seven Turkish vessels or to prohibit the Turks from again trading at Basra, Tavarez 'burnt two towns' and then retired to Hormuz. The same year, an expedition to Bahrain, which had rebelled against the authority of the King of Hormuz, ended disastrously to the Portuguese, owing to their inadequate equipment.

In 1542, in consequence of the difficulty experienced in obtaining the tribute payable by the King of Hormuz, now in arrears to the extent of 500,000 ducats, the Viceroy, Martim Affonso, having satisfied himself of the inability of the king to pay, agreed to waive all claim to back dues, but forced him to make over to the Portuguese the entire control of customs duties of the port thenceforward; the native officials, however, were to retain their posts. From this time the question of arrears of tribute no longer arose, for the Portuguese satisfied their claims themselves; and by this compulsory appropriation of the customs, became the *de facto* 'proprietors' of Hormuz.[3]

Towards the middle of the sixteenth century the Turks began to show increased activity in the Persian Gulf territories, which

[1] Faria y Sousa's quaint relation of this incident throws an interesting sidelight on Portuguese maladministration: 'In his (Lopo Vaz) Passage he reduced the Towns of Calayate and Mascate, which had revolted, being exasperated by the avarice of James de Melo; for it is certain the King and public suffer for the Interest of private Men, a thing D. Enrique was so sensible of, that this Melo being then Commander at Ormuz, he writ to him to be more moderate, and not provoke thirty years to go from Goa to teach sixty at Ormuz, for these were the ages of them both. Lopo Vaz did nothing at Ormuz, but compose the Difference between James de Melo and Raez Xarafo (Sharafin), which had occasioned the Revolt of those two Towns, and receive the Tribute of that King.'

[2] The comparatively newly built city, described as being, at this time, about twice as big as Grand Cairo.

[3] Curzon (4).

soon led to open conflicts between them and the Portuguese. In 1550 the Arabs at Qatif delivered up their fortress to the Turks, an act which highly incensed the King of Hormuz; they also expelled the ruler of Basra from his kingdom. The latter, however, having a force of 30,000 men at his disposal, called in, during the viceroyalty of Affonso de Noronha, the aid of the Portuguese, offering them in return, among other concessions, permission to erect a fortress in the harbour of Basra. The Viceroy dispatched a fleet of nineteen vessels and 1,200 men to the Persian Gulf, under the command of Antonio de Noronha, to the assistance of the kings of Qatif and Basra. Noronha razed the fortress of Qatif to the ground, sailed for Basra, but accomplished little there, for, 'here a cunning Bassa persuaded him he was sent for to be delivered up to his Enemies; whereupon he returned Inglorious to Ormuz, where being come he understood the Deceit, but it was too late'.[1]

The Turks, offended by the actions of the Portuguese at Qatif and Basra, determined to take revenge, and accordingly sent one Pir Beg, described by Fraser[2] as 'a veteran pirate', with 16,000 men in a fleet of galleys on a piratical cruise in the Gulf. Noronha, then at Hormuz, sent vessels to find out Pir Beg's whereabouts; he fell in with Pir's son, by whom he was nearly captured. Pir Beg's fleet attacked Muscat, sacked the town, and the Portuguese captain of the fort, João de Lisboa, surrendered after suffering a bombardment lasting eighteen days. Pir Beg had all the guns removed to his ships and put the captain and sixty men to the galleys. This done, he proceeded to Hormuz itself, and made a demonstration.

Faria y Sousa picturesquely describes Pir Beg's activities at Hormuz:

'The Enemies Fleet came before Muscate, which held out almost a month against that great Power; but was forced to submit and capitulate. Pirbec broke the Articles, putting the Captain and sixty men to the Oar; some of them were afterwards ransomed. This done, Pirbec goes on to Ormuz. D. Alvaro de Noronha had nine hundred men in that Fort, and in it was the King, his Wife, Children, and the Chief of their Court, who had taken Sanctuary there. He laid up Ammunition for a long Siege, and secured forty Sail that were in the Bay. . . . The Turk being come to an Anchor, presently Landed and Encamped. He Intrenched, raised Batteries, planted much Cannon and played it furiously without intermission for a whole Month. Finding he sustained much Loss, and laboured in vain, he plundered

[1] Faria y Sousa (2). [2] Fraser, J. B.

the City and went over to the Island of Queixome (Qishm), whither many considerable Men of Ormuz had withdrawn themselves ; here he got a great Booty, and retired.'

Learning of the danger which threatened the Portuguese position in the Persian Gulf, consequent on the activities of Pir Beg, the Viceroy Noronha fitted out a large fleet to go in person to the relief of Hormuz, sailing in September 1551. Arrived there, and finding that Hormuz was no longer in danger, he returned to Goa. Pir Beg's head was cut off at Constantinople in 1552, because he had exceeded orders, and one Murad Beg, who had been responsible for the loss of Qatif, succeeded him. Setting out with a fleet of fifteen galleys, he encountered the Portuguese fleet, under Diego de Noronha, off the Persian coast, and a sharp engagement ensued with no decisive result. A year later the Portuguese fell in with the Turkish fleet, now under Ali Chalabi, off Muscat, practically annihilated it, and re-established their supremacy in the Gulf.

Subsequently, the Turks desired to possess themselves of the Arabian ports on the Persian Gulf. A fleet of two galleys and seventy barges, with 1,200 Turks and Janissaries, attacked the fortress at Bahrain. Help of the Portuguese being forthcoming from Hormuz, the place was relieved, and the Turks delivered up the prisoners in their hands, all their cannon, arms, and horses, paid the sum of 10,000 ducats, and retired to Basra.

In 1581 Muscat was temporarily seized by the Turks under one Ali Beg, who set out with three Turkish galleys from the port of Mokha. A sudden attack was made on the town and the Portuguese, unprepared for it, fled in panic into the interior. When Ali Beg withdrew, the Portuguese returned to find the town completely sacked.[1]

The Khans of Lar had in former days been paramount to the Kings of Hormuz, but during the period of Portuguese supremacy this position became reversed. Faria y Sousa says: ' The Kings of Lara always aspired to raise themselves above those of Ormuz, as formerly they had been. He that now reigned resolving to possess himself of all Mogostan, and leading a powerful Army had taken several Towns and kept the Fort of Ormuz in a manner besieged, by hindring the resort of the neighbouring Country People who supply it with Provisions.' So, assisted by a strong force of Portuguese, the King of Hormuz marched to the

[1] At this point, 1580, it is essential to note that Portugal came under the domination of Spain and so remained until 1640.

fort of Shamil, which was considered impregnable, ' not so much by Art as by natural Situation ', and after a hard struggle the united forces gained possession of the fort and occupied it; and the investment of Hormuz came to an end.

In 1586 the Portuguese sent an expedition under Mello Pombeyro to Mombasa, where the Turks had erected a fortress. Having destroyed the city by fire and achieved his object, Pombeyro set sail for Hormuz. Here he died, and his successor proceeded to erect a fort at Muscat and to establish a hold there similar to that at Hormuz.

Towards the close of the sixteenth century a change occurred in the circumstances of the Portuguese in the East, brought about by the arrival of other European ships, which had come to share with them the profits of the Eastern trade. The Dutch appeared in Eastern waters, and England was moving in a similar direction. Though the Dutch had begun, in 1596 or 1597, to turn their attention to the East Indies, they had not yet appeared in Persian Gulf waters; but even earlier, in 1583, the famous young Dutchman—Jan Huyghen van Linschoten—had sailed from Lisbon on his epoch-making voyage to the East.

As to England, the East India Company had not yet come into being, and the commercial possibilities of the East had only been unofficially reconnoitred by a few individual Englishmen. Notable among these was John Newberie, who left England and reached Hormuz in 1580, returning to London in 1582. Within six months Newberie again left England, accompanied by Ralph Fitch and others, reaching Hormuz in 1583 and returning to London in 1591. Of a more official character was Lancaster's expedition [1] to Eastern waters in 1591. But the full history of these movements will find place in the succeeding chapter.

[1] See *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster, Knt., to the East Indies*, Hakluyt Society, 1877.

IX

ENGLISH AND PORTUGUESE RIVALRY

'Historians coolly dissect a man's thoughts as they please, and label them like specimens in a naturalist's cabinet. Such a thing, they argue, was done for mere personal aggrandizement; such a thing for national objects; such a thing from high religious motives. In real life we may be sure it was not so.'—GARDINER.

WE may now review the course of events which resulted in the passing of the control of Gulf waters by the Portuguese to the hands of others. As Shah Abbas I the Great, who ascended the Persian throne in 1587, proceeded to consolidate his power, he looked with an increasingly jealous eye upon the usurpers of Hormuz. 'The Portuguese', says Lord Curzon, 'were fanatical, oppressive, and destitute of the true commercial spirit. Instead of conciliating, they trampled upon Persian trade, compelling the Persians to purchase from Portuguese magazines, at prices fixed by themselves, and to ship their wares on Portuguese vessels.' [1] Such a policy brought its own nemesis.

Bent on regaining possession of Hormuz, Abbas urged the Khan of Lar to lay claim to it, on the convenient plea that certain tribute had fallen into arrears. This tribute had, in truth, been suspended since Alboquerque captured the island. The Khan greatly embarrassed the trade of Hormuz, and differences arose regarding the Persian trade in silk. As the Portuguese declined to admit the claim of the Persians, Shah Abbas entered into a curious pact with King James of England for the capture of the island; but to grasp the true significance of this agreement, it is necessary to step back a quarter of a century and consider the various events which led up to it.

The Sherley Missions. In 1598 two English gentlemen, brothers, of good family and military reputation, sought the court of Shah Abbas. Sir Anthony Sherley, the elder, gives an account of the reasons which led him to travel in Persia: [2] encouraged by the Earl of Essex he proceeded with some soldiers of approved valour to aid the Duke of Ferrara against the pretensions of the Pope. The struggle was decided, by the submission of the duke, before the English knight reached the scene of action; and he himself says that his patron,

'not willing I should returne, and turne such a voice as was raised of my

[1] Curzon (4), ii, p. 418.

[2] Sherley, A. (2).

VIII. ABBAS THE GREAT

going to nothing; as vnwilling that I should, by a vaine expence of my time, money, and hope, bee made a scorne to his and (through him) to my enemies: Hee proposed vnto me (after a small relation, which I made vnto him from Venice) the voiage of Persia, grounding of it vpon two points.

'First, the Glory of God; to which, his excellent religious mind was euermore deuote. Then, if God would not please to choose me as a worthy instrument to that great end; yet by making a profitable experience of my seeing those Countries, limitting vpon the King of Spaines vniall parts, and answering to her Maiesties Merchants trades in Turky, and Muskouy; and besides, being not vnlikely but some parts might haue bene found fit for the Indian Nauigation, then principiated in Holland, and muttered of in England.'[1]

Arrived at Kazvin, the two Sherleys, with their twenty-six followers, 'gallantly mounted and richly furnished',[2] presented themselves to Shah Abbas as English knights who had heard of the fame of the Persian monarch and desired the honour of entering his service. They were well received. Sir Anthony Sherley neither had, nor did he assume, any right to the character of a public representative. But the principal aims underlying his mission were to induce the Shah to make common cause with the Christian powers of Europe against the Turks, and to open the way for commercial intercourse with England. After proving his sincerity of purpose in a variety of ways, as instanced by the pains he took to instruct the Persians in the science of war,[3] we are told that he was eventually entrusted with a mission to various courts of Europe.

The credentials, says Sir John Malcolm,[4] which Abbas gave to Sir Anthony Sherley are perhaps the most singular by which any public representative was ever accredited. They were addressed to the Christian sovereigns of Europe, whom the Muhammadan monarch called upon to embrace his friendship, in these terms:

'There is come unto me,' the document runs, 'in this good time, a principall gentleman, (Sir Anthony Shierlie,) of his own free will, out of Europe, into thiese parts: and al you princes y beleeue in Jesus Christ, know you, that he hath made friendship betweene you and me; which desire we had

[1] *Idem*, p. 4.

[2] Purchas.

[3] 'The mightie Ottoman, terror of the Christian World, quaketh of a Sherly Feuer, and giues hopes of approching fates: the preuailing Persian hath learned Sherleian Arts of War; and he which before knew not the vse of Ordnance, hath now 500 Peeces of Brasse, and 60,000 Musketiers; so that they, which at hand with the Sword were before dreadfull to the Turkes, now also in remoter blowes and sulfurian Arts, are growne terrible.' Purchas, xi. 1806.

[4] Malcolm, J. (2).

also heretofore graunted, but there was none that came to make the way, and to remoue the uaile that was betweene us and you, but onely this gentleman; who as he came of his owne free will, so also oppon his desire, I haue sent with him a chiefe man of mine. The entertainement which that principall gentleman hath had with me, is, that daylie, whil'st he hath bin in thiese partes, we have eaten togither of one dysh, and drunke of one cup, like two breethen. . . . Therefore, when this gentleman comes unto you Christian princes, you shall credite him in whatseuer he shall demaunde or he shall say, as mine owne person: and when this gentleman shall haue passed the sea, and is entred into the Countrey of the great King of Muscouie, (with whom we are in friendshippe as brethen,) all his gouernours, both great and small shall accompany him, and use him with all favour, unto Mosco: and because there is great loue between you, the King of Mosco, and mee, that wee are like two breethren, I have sent this gentleman through your countrey, and desire you to fauour his passage, without any hindrance.' [1]

At the same time, Shah Abbas granted by farman many and important privileges to Christian merchants desirous of trading with Persia; the farman promised the fullest security to all such, both as regards the safety of their property and the free exercise of their religion. The privileges and immunities thus freely offered by the ruling monarch to British merchants have, though much modified in process of time, been enjoyed by almost all foreigners resident in Persia for the past three hundred years. Unlike the 'Capitulations' in Turkey, they have seldom been a source of serious embarrassment to the Persian Governments, except occasionally in North Persia, where Russian officials were as prone before the Russian Revolution, on the strength of ancient treaties, as since on other grounds, to demand unreasonable advantages for their very numerous protégés. This grant, instituting, theoretically at least, a new era in the commercial relationship of Persia with the states of Europe, is so important that a full translation of it is given below.[2]

[1] Sherley, A. (1).

[2] It runs as follows: 'Our absolute commaundement, will, and pleasure, is, that our cuntries and dominions shall be, from this day, open to all Christian people, and to their religion; and in such sort, that none of ours, of any condition, shall presume to giue them any euil word. And because of the amitie now ioyned with the princes that professe Christ, I do giue this pattent for all Christian marchants, to repaire and trafique, in and through our dominions, without disturbances or molestations of any duke, prince, gouernour, or captaine, or any, of whatsoeuer office or qualitie of ours; but that all merchandize that they shall bring, shall be so priviledged, that none of any dignitie or authoritie, shall haue power to looke unto it: neyther to make inquisition after, or stay, for any use or person, the value of one asper. Neyther

IX. ANTHONY SHERLEY

Thus equipped, Sir Anthony Sherley proceeded to Europe by way of Moscow. Little seems to have come, at least directly, of his mission, for after having visited various courts of Europe he eventually reached Madrid, where he settled, and died in 1630, never having returned to Persia. But Robert Sherley remained at the court of the Shah after his brother's departure, and was appointed Master-General of the Persian army, in which exalted position he greatly distinguished himself in the campaigns which Abbas successfully waged against the Emperor of Constantinople between 1602 and 1627,[1] whereby he had hopes of realizing his dream of eliminating the Turk and bringing the confines of his realm and those of the Christian kingdoms together.

The Shah, having received no news of Sir Anthony's embassy, began in course of time to regard Robert Sherley with less favour than at first. Nevertheless, in 1608 or 1609, notwithstanding the apparently fruitless results of the first mission, he dispatched Robert Sherley to Europe, for much the same purpose as his brother, viz. to establish and confirm relations of friendship between Persia and the European powers, and to announce his intention of utterly destroying the Turks and bringing the Persian

shall our religious men, of whatsoeuer sort they be, dare disturbe them, or speake in matters of faith. Neyther shall any of our justices haue power ouer their persons or goodes, for any cause or act whatsoeuer.'

(Then follows a paragraph regarding the disposal of the property of a merchant in the event of his death.)

'And those within our kingdomes and prouinces, hauing power ouer our tolles and customes, shall receiue nothing, or dare to speake for any receipt from any Christian merchant.

'And if any such Christian shall giue credite to any of our subjectes, (of any condition whatsoeuer) he shall, by this pattent of ours, haue authoritie to require any caddie, or gouernor, to do him justice, and thereupon, at the instant of his demaunde, shall cause him to be satisfied.

'Neither shall any gouernor, or justice, of what quality so euer he be, dare take any reward of him, which shall be to his expense: for our will and pleasure is, that they shall be used, in all our dominions, to their owne full content, and that our kingdomes and cuntries shall be free unto them.

'That none shall presume to aske them for what occasion they are heere.

'And although it hath bin a continuall and unchaungeable use in our dominions euery yeere to renue all pattents, this pattent, notwithstanding, shall be of full effect and force for euer, without reneuing, for me and my successors, not to be chaunged.'
Report of Sir Anthony Sherley's Journey, 1600.

[1] Prior to 1600, a considerable part of Persia was under the Turks, who held Tiflis, Tabriz, and Nehavend. The Shah at this time set himself with much success to recover the lost provinces. In 1602 he took Nehavend, in 1603 dislodged the Turks from Tabriz, and finally, in 1605, he completely defeated the Ottoman forces at a great battle, in which Sir Robert Sherley received three wounds.

frontiers into contact with those of Christendom. Sherley visited Poland, Germany, and Italy, and then proceeded to Madrid, where he propounded a scheme for diverting the silk trade (then carried on overland to the advantage of the Turks) to Hormuz or to some adjacent port in the Persian Gulf; but the scheme was coldly received by the Spanish court. He then came to England, in 1611, and delivered letters from Abbas professing 'the Persian's great love and affection unto his Majesty, with hearty desire of amity with the King of Great Britain, with frank offer of free commerce unto all His Highness's subjects throughout all the Persian dominions', &c. The results of Sherley's negotiations in England were somewhat nugatory: there was some doubt as to the validity of his mission, and his projects were opposed by the East India merchants.[1] After being knighted, Sir Robert returned in 1613, by way of Sind, to Persia and continued in the service of the Shah.[2]

In 1613 some alarm was felt in Spain as to the safety of Hormuz, for in November of that year Philip III of Spain warned the Portuguese authorities in India that, while in England, Sir Robert Sherley had negotiated for vessels with which to attack Hormuz, and that he had started from Europe armed with powers to conclude a treaty with the Shah to open up a commerce in silk and silk goods. In a letter to the Viceroy the Spanish king laid great stress on the necessity of fortifying Hormuz against the English, and urged the capture of the ambassador; but, despite all, Sherley managed to evade capture and passed safely into Persia.

[1] Among other proposals, he urged the East India Company to establish a factory at Gwadar.

Sir Thomas Roe, who played a distinguished part in the development of English trade in the East, formed the unfavourable opinion of him that: 'as hee is dishonest, soe hee is subtile'.

[2] Later, Sir Robert Sherley was sent by Shah Abbas on a second mission to Spain, to arrange, if possible, a treaty by which the whole monopoly of the silk trade would be given to Spain (the object being to divert its transit by way of Turkey) with a right to re-fortify Bandar Abbas and some other ports, and Spain was to send yearly a fleet with spices, pepper, Indian linen, &c., in exchange partly, but for the most part ready money. *Selections from State Papers, Bombay*, 1600–1800. Saldanha, J. A.

This mission ended in failure, notwithstanding a five years' sojourn in Madrid—during which Hormuz fell. In 1622, or thereabout, Sir Robert proceeded to England to negotiate further with King Charles. Nothing could be more exaggerated, says Malcolm, than the impressions he desired to convey to the British court of the wealth and resources of Persia, but the King's government were nevertheless flattered by the prospect of gain presented to them, and ultimately the King decided to send Sir Dodmore Cotton as ambassador to Persia with a numerous suite, and with him returned Sir Robert in 1627.

Inception of the East India Company. Meanwhile, at the close of the year 1600, the English East India Company was incorporated, under Royal Charter (dated 31st December 1600) granted by Queen Elizabeth, as the 'Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading into the East Indies'.

The earliest attempts by Englishmen to reach India for purposes of trade were by the 'North-West Passage', and subsequently through Russia.[1] The first Englishman who actually visited India with an eye to commercial intercourse, was Thomas Stephens, of New College, Oxford, 1579, afterwards Rector of the Jesuits' College at Goa, whose letters to his father roused great enthusiasm in England for direct trade with India. But the papers of the *St. Philip*, a Portuguese vessel captured by Drake in 1587, afforded so much information as to the profits of the Indian trade, that they are considered to have, at last, fixed the determination of the English to establish direct communication with India. Moreover, the destruction of the 'Invincible Armada', in 1588, gave them confidence in their own navy and in their ability to cope with the Spanish and Portuguese, then masters on the high seas. So from this date the merchants of London began earnestly to devise measures for supplanting the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean.

The alluring commercial possibilities of the East had, to some extent, been previously reconnoitred by the four enterprising Englishmen, Ralph Fitch, with his companions, John Newberie, William Deedes, and James Story, who, bearing letters from Queen Elizabeth to the King of Cambay and to the Emperor of China, in 1583, set forth on a remarkably adventurous journey. From the Syrian port of Tripoli they went across country and down the Euphrates to Falluja, thence to Baghdad, and down the Tigris to Basra, whence they sailed down the Persian Gulf to Hormuz.[2] At Hormuz they were arrested by the Portuguese

[1] Among others was Anthony Jenkinson, in 1561; who, having procured a letter from Queen Elizabeth to the Shah, Tahmas, went into Persia. 'Therefore,' ran the letter, 'whereas our faithfull and right well beloved servant Anthonie Jenkinson, bearer of these our letters, is determined, with our licence, favour, and grace, to passe out of this our realme, and by Gods sufferance to travel even into Persia, and other your jurisdictions: We minde truely with our good fauour, to sette forward, and aduance, that his right laudable purpose: and the more willingly, for that this his enterprise is grounded upon an honest intent to establish trade of merchandize with your subiects, and with other strangers trafficking your realmes.'

[2] Newberie had previously made the overland journey by way of Aleppo and Basra in 1580–1, and thence to Hormuz, where he had stayed six weeks.

authorities on suspicion of being spies, and were sent as prisoners to Goa, where they remained for some time in captivity. Fitch's own description of this misfortune is as follows:

'Here (Hormuz) very shortly after our arriuall wee were put in Prison, and had part of our goods taken from vs by the Captaine of the Castle, whose name was Don Mathias de Albuquerque; and from hence the eleuenth of October hee shipped vs and sent vs for Goa vnto the Viceroy.'[1]

Ralph Fitch, after visiting many parts of India and Burma and going as far as Malacca and Siam, alone returned to England in 1591, and wrote an account of his second journey.[2] The glowing report of the inexhaustible riches of the East brought back by this adventurous pioneer stirred London, and doubtless did much to stimulate a desire in England to have a share in this wealth, hitherto monopolized by the Portuguese.

The earliest activities of the East India Company consisted in the dispatch of 'trading fleets' to the East, and between the years 1600 and 1612 they had sent out twelve such and succeeded in acquiring a commercial footing in India. The first English trading ship arrived at Surat in 1608, under the command of William Hawkins, who was bearer of a letter of recommendation from King James to the Great Mughal, and some measure of success was attained. In 1612 Thomas Best, arriving with another fleet of three ships, succeeded in obtaining a trading

[1] Purchas, ii, p. 1730.

[2] He thus describes the voyage down the Gulf from Basra—in his day, 'a Towne of great trade of Spices and drugs'—to Hormuz: 'I went . . . in a certaine ship made of bordes, and sowed together with Cayro, which is threed made of the Huske of Cocoes and certaine Canes or straw leaues sowed vpon the seames of the borders which is the cause that they leake very much. And so hauing Persia always on the left hand, and the Coast of Arabia on the right hand wee passed many Ilands, and among others, the famous Iland of Baharim, from whence come the best Pearles which be round and Orient.' Hormuz he quaintly describes as 'the dryest Iland in the world: for there is nothing growing in it but onely Salt'. Of the commercial possibilities and wealth of this port he also appears to have been greatly impressed, for—'In this Towne are Merchants of all Nations, and many Moores and Gentiles. Here is a great trade of all sorts of Spices, Drugs, Silke, cloth of Silke, fine Tapestrie of Persia, great store of Pearles which come from the Ile of Baharim, and are the best Pearles of all others, and many Horses of Persia, which serue all India. They haue a Moore to their King which is chosen and gouerned by the Portugals.' Of the women of Hormuz, he says: 'they are very strangely attired, wearing on their Noses, Eares, Neckes, armes and legges, many rings set with Iewels, and lockes of Siluer and Gold in their eares, and a long barre of gold vpon the side of their Noses. Their Eares with the weight of their Iewels be worne so wide, that a man may thrust three of his fingers into them.' Ibid., pp. 1730 ff.

agreement from the local authorities at Surat, which was confirmed in general terms by a farman of the Mughal emperor, and, not long after, a trading factory was established at Surat. In 1615 a further important step was taken by the East India Company in London. Experience, especially of the active hostility of the Portuguese to all their projects, had convinced them that their commercial interests in India would be better served and their position strengthened by the residence of a diplomatic representative of the King of England at the court of the Great Mughal. The suggestion being favourably received by King James, Sir Thomas Roe, a gentleman of eminent capacity, with some experience of travel and of courts, became the accredited ambassador to the court of the Great Mughal, at Ajmir, in 1615.[1]

The tenor of the instructions to Sir Thomas Roe, given at Whitehall, 29th December 1614, were as follows:

'Instructions for Sir Thomas Roe, knight, authorised by us, under our great seal of England, to repair as our ambassador to the Great Magoar (or Emperor of the Oriental Indies). To be careful of the preservation of the King's honour and dignity, both as we are a sovereign prince and a professed Christian. To advance the trade of the East India Company, the main scope of his employment, and referring him to their directions from which he is in no wise to digress. To answer to the Great Magoar, if he should ask why the Portugals at Goa or thereabouts do not agree with the King's subjects in those parts, but use hostility against them, that: "the Portugals desirous to engross the whole trade, yet the English being able to repel their force, by way of defence, His Majesty is willing to abstain from further actions of offence".'[2]

Thus was established, on a firm footing, the East India Company —one step in the extraordinary social and political development of England during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. It is not, however, our purpose to follow the doings and development of the Company in the East Indies as a whole, but to consider those of its activities only which gradually extended to Persia and the region of the Persian Gulf.

[1] The Company's choice fell on Sir Thomas Roe, 'he being a gentleman of pregnant understanding, well spoken, learned, industrious, of a comely personage, and one of whom there are great hopes that he may work much good for the Company'.

His fitness to be about the person of the Emperor was recognized: it was necessary 'to procure and confirm the most beneficial articles and privileges; to obtain from the Great Magore an absolute settlement, and by fair means to obtain a quiet and peacable trade'. *Calendar of State Papers*, 1513–1616, No. 765.

[2] *Idem*, No. 852.

When the English factors first repaired to the Mughal court, their broadcloth and other commodities found a ready sale; but a large quantity, ordered from England, proved greatly in excess of demand. Thomas Aldworth,[1] on the look-out for markets, discovered an outlet in Persia, where, he was told, they might be sure 'of the vente of much cloth, in regard their country is much cold, and men, women and children are clothed therewith some five months of the year'. This information was reported to Aldworth by one Richard Steele, a young man of Bristol, who had crossed Persia in 1614 in pursuit of a debtor and, reaching Surat, had given such a glowing account of the opportunities for trade in Persia that he was dispatched with another factor, John Crowther, to Isfahan, to procure further information and to solicit a farman, 'for the fair and peaceable entertainment of our men, ships and goods in all such ports as they shall arrive at'.

Steele and Crowther were furnished with letters of recommendation to Sir Robert Sherley, who had recently returned from his roving mission as the Shah's representative to the various European courts (1608–13). They were to examine into the practicability of the proposed trading scheme and to visit the harbours of the Persian shore of the Gulf to see which were fit for shipping. They appear to have been coldly received by Sherley at first, but in the end their mission proved eminently successful, for in 1616 a farman was obtained from Shah Abbas, by the terms of which his subjects, of 'whatsoever degree', were enjoined 'to kindly receive and entertain the English Frankes or Nation who might present themselves'.[2] As to the choice of a port for trade, after having examined 'Jasques, Damone (Bandar Abbas?), Batan (the Batina coast of Oman?), Barin (Bahrain), and Rochell (Reshire)',[3] they reported the first-named (Jask), situated about ninety miles east of Hormuz, to be a convenient place for the purpose in view—'a little within entrance of the Gulf of Persia, at a headland . . . and not so much in danger of the Portuguese as Bareen'.[4]

[1] He appears to have been a man of some standing before his entry into the Company's service. He was at Surat, as head of the factory there, and held that post until his death in 1615.

[2] The full text of the farman, translated out of the Persian, may be found in Purchas, i, p. 524.

[3] *Selections from State Papers, Bombay*, J. A. Saldanha, p. ii. See also Birdwood and Foster, *The Register of Letters*, pp. 458 f., foot-note.

[4] Having thus effected his object, Steele, in accordance with instructions, made his way overland to England, where he arrived in May 1616. He was well received by the Company, and went out again to Surat in Captain Pring's 'fleet'

Steele's reason for the selection of Jask is given in a letter to the Company, written in 1616 or 1617. Herein, he says, 'are Portes in the Persian Countrye that a shippe of aboue one hundred Tonnes can hardly Anker ther, and yet nearer *Ormus*, then Cape Iasques which I haue bene credibley enformed of that shipping of 5 or 6 hundred Tonnes may Anchor within Sacar [1] shott of the shore, which great shipping as I iudge is fitter to deffend the assaults of the Portugalls then those of smaler burthen '.[2]

The grant of the farman to Steele provoked an immediate discussion as to whether the commercial privileges granted by the Shah should be turned to account by the East India Company, and, if so, in what manner. Sir Thomas Roe enjoined caution and proposed a thorough inquiry into the conditions of commerce in Persia: he suggested that he himself should visit Isfahan, under a commission from King James, to arrange matters personally. He regarded the farman as of little value, chiefly because it made no provision for a fortified port in the Gulf (as a counterblast to the strong Portuguese port of Hormuz) and because it contained no assurance that trade would be actually directed to Jask or, for that matter, to any port with which the English might have to do. 'Concerning Persia,' he said, 'the Factors do not understand what they have undertaken. Jasques is no Port or place for sale of Goods, and those they have sent are not saleable.'[3] He further considered the time to be inopportune for such a venture in Persia, inasmuch as Sir Robert Sherley had recently left Persia (see p. 132) as ambassador from the Shah to the King of Spain, with instructions to arrange, if possible, that the Portuguese and Spaniards, on being granted permission to occupy Bandar Abbas and other places on the coast, should there purchase all the merchandise brought down for export, and should send a yearly fleet to the Gulf with spices, pepper, and Indian linen. His con-

in 1617; for some time after, Steele and his wife were a sore trouble to Sir Thomas Roe. Steele returned home with Roe in 1619, and received a very cold welcome from the Company. His offers of service in 1623 were declined; but a few years later, having secured some powerful influence to back him, he was more successful, and in 1626 was again in the Company's employment. He was sent 'to the southward', i. e. to Java; his private trading soon gave cause for complaint, and in 1627 the Court peremptorily recalled him. Here his history closes. Birdwood and Foster, foot-note, pp. 457 f.

[1] A 'sacar' or 'saker' was a piece of ordnance of $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches bore, with a range of 1,700 paces.

[2] Birdwood and Foster, pp. 458 f.

[3] Extract from a letter from Sir Thomas Roe to the East India Company, dated 24. 11. 1616. See also Bruce, vol. i, pp. 186 f.

tention was that, if Sherley's mission were successful, the undertakings of the Company's servants would be frustrated. In these circumstances, Sir Thomas Roe sought to dissuade the Company from taking any decisive step. He, however, wrote a letter to the Shah, in which he thanked him for the farman given to Steele, but pointed out that the Shah's negotiations with Spain were inconsistent with the terms of the farman—whereby freedom of trade was granted to *all* Christian merchants—and hinted that the grant of a monopoly to another nation might oblige the English to resort to arms and so disturb the tranquillity of the Gulf.

The factors at Surat, however, took a different view, and were determined to open a factory or factories in Persia in spite of Roe's opinion. Their reasons were: (*a*) that the present opportunity was a good one, seeing that Sherley was absent from Persia, who would be either a troublesome enemy or an expensive friend; (*b*) that the war between Persia and Turkey having blocked commercial intercourse with Europe, there would in consequence be a plethora of silk and a dearth of cloth in Persia; (*c*) that it was necessary to find a market for the large surplus of goods at Surat; and (*d*) that the port of Jask was conveniently situated, and that one ship would suffice for its defence against a Portuguese attack. Roe's views were consequently overruled, his opinions being dismissed by the factors, in a letter to the Company, with the observation that, ' in regard his Lordship in other particulars of his said letter is far transported (in error of opinion) concerning merchandising and merchants' affairs in these parts, makes us assured that he is no less transported from and concerning the Persian employment '.

Edward Connock, an adventurous person, who had had long experience of trading in Turkey, was chosen to direct the new venture, and in 1616 the first English vessel, the *James*, was dispatched from Surat to Jask with a considerable cargo of goods for Persia.[1] The Portuguese endeavoured to intercept the vessel, but failed, and it arrived early in December after twenty-seven days' sail. The goods were landed in the following January, and this transaction, insignificant in itself, is nevertheless important as marking the beginning of the British share in the maritime and trading activity of the Persian Gulf. By 1619 matters had moved

[1] The staff of the Company's ' mission ' to Persia consisted of Edward Connock, the leader of the expedition, Thomas Barker, next in seniority, George Pley, Edward Petters, William Bell, William Tracye, and Mathew Pepwell.

so far that a factory was established at Jask, and, until the port of Gombrun was opened to the English, it was from this port that the overland trade with the Persian capital was conducted.

Much to the credit of Sir Thomas Roe, though he entirely disapproved of the independent action of the Surat factors and made no secret of his opinion, he did his best to prevent the failure of their enterprise. It appears that he was in favour of systematic, as opposed to desultory trade, and while he was in favour of free trade and a peaceful understanding with Spain, there were others who thought that the Shah should be encouraged to drive the Portuguese out of Hormuz, and that the aim of the English policy should be to establish a monopoly of Persian trade in favour of the East India Company.

The East India Company's activities during the next few years may be briefly stated. In 1617 a factory was established by Connock at Shiraz, and early the same year he arrived at Isfahan, where a second factory was opened. The Shah was absent on the Turkish frontier on the arrival of Connock, but, when at last the Englishman reached him, he met with a very cordial reception, the Persian monarch even going so far as to style King James ' his elder brother ', to drink to his health in a large bowl of wine, and to promise that Jask or any other port which they might require should be given to the English. Connock obtained a further highly satisfactory ' grant of privileges ' from the Shah.[1]

In 1618 some further concessions of a minor character were obtained by the Company's agents in Persia, and the Shah seems eventually to have agreed with Thomas Barker, who had supplanted Connock in the affairs of the mission, that all silk leaving Persia should, in future, be sold to the English, and that none should be sent to Europe by way of Turkey or be disposed of to the Spanish or to the Portuguese. The preferential position thus established (in theory at least) by the English was highly satisfactory.[2]

[1] The text of this farman does not appear to be extant, but its substance is embodied in a later farman of Shah Safi (1629). It provided, among other matters, for the perpetual residence of an English ambassador at the Persian court, and for dispatch, should circumstances make it desirable, of a Persian ambassador to England; the right of buying and selling freely in the Persian dominions; protection in the exercise of their religion; authorization to possess arms and to use them, if necessary, in self-defence; the power of appointing agents and factors in Persia by the English ambassador; and, in criminal cases, Englishmen were to be punished by their own ambassador, &c. *Letters received by the East India Company*, vol. vi, p. 293.

[2] The line of policy which Shah Abbas would eventually take had remained for

It will be well at this point to examine briefly the contemporaneous position of the Portuguese in the Gulf. We left them, in 1600, supreme masters of the principal ports on both sides of the Gulf—Hormuz and Qishm, Muscat and Bahrain, and, commercially at least, of Basra at the head of the Gulf—but with their power already showing signs of incipient decay. It may easily be understood that the appearance of the English in their Eastern ' preserve ' caused them great alarm, and every move of the English ships was regarded with a jealous eye. To keep their hold on the trade, the Portuguese endeavoured to prevent any foreign ships from navigating these seas without a pass from the captain of one of their forts, and then only under the most oppressive conditions. The institution of this system roused the active opposition of the Company's agents at Surat, who, confident in the discipline and valour of their sailors, resolved to seize any opportunity that might arise of wresting the supremacy of the Persian Gulf from their rivals.

About the year 1602 the Portuguese were dislodged by the Shah of Persia from Bahrain, of which they had been masters since they routed the Turks late in the previous century. In 1604 they were in bad odour along the whole Persian coast, on account of the raids committed by their vessels, and their merchant ships could not obtain supplies, Nakhilu and Rig being places particu-

long a matter of great uncertainty. He had for some time apparently hankered after an arrangement with some particular European nation in regard to the silk trade. He wrote, for instance, to the King of Spain, telling him ' he was weary of receiving Friers as Ambassadors ', and desired him to send him some ' Spanish Gentleman of Note ', instead of ecclesiastics, as hitherto, ' for he should know better how to treat with such a one, and God and His Majesty would be better served, because a religious man out of his cell was like a fish out of water '.

In response to this invitation, Don Garcia de Silva Figueroa was dispatched as special envoy of the Spanish king. He came by way of Goa (1614) and Hormuz (1617, during the operations of Connock, in Persia) and had audiences in 1618 with the Shah at Kazvin, and later at Isfahan. In his final audience with the Shah (at which the Englishman Barker and several foreign ambassadors were present) Figueroa presented letters demanding, first, the restitution of Gombrun and other territories lately conquered by the Persians, which were claimed by the Portuguese on behalf of the titular king of Hormuz, and, secondly, the exclusion of the English and all other Europeans from the Persian trade. This was too much for the Shah, who tore up the letters and swore that, so far from restoring what he had already taken, he would drive the Portuguese from their fortress at Hormuz; while he ordered a farman to be made out, granting the sole trade in silks by the sea route to the English. Figueroa returned to Goa, via Hormuz. He finally left Goa in 1620 and reached Spain, by way of the Cape of Good Hope, in 1624, after an absence of ten years. Figueroa (2).

larly hostile to them. Teixeira, who voyaged up the Gulf about this time, says: 'Along this coast we sailed for thirty-five days with much toil and trouble. Our provision began to fail; nor could we renew it there, for all that shore is disturbed by the wanton ravages of the Portuguese *fustas* (or "foists", i. e. small armed vessels), which commonly cruise there. . . . . Farther north is Regh Ceyfadin (Rig), inhabited, like most of this coast of Persia, by Arabs, tributary to its Shah, or King; and some of them recognise the Portuguese, taking their *cartazes*, or *passaports*, without which they would sail in peril of the Portuguese fustas, cruising commonly in those narrow seas. The men of Regh were then on ill terms with the Portuguese, by reason of grievances before mentioned.' [1]

In 1612 and in 1615 Portuguese fleets met with defeat in encounters with the English off Surat, and their inferiority at sea began to be suspected by the Mughal Government. These reverses soon had a repercussive effect on their credit in the Persian Gulf. About the year 1612 the Portuguese appear to have seized and fortified Gombrun, or Bandar Abbas (recently founded by Shah Abbas I as a counter-check upon Hormuz), as a precaution against a possible blockade of Hormuz. In 1613 the Khan of Lar tried to recover the town and failed; but the Portuguese retained Bandar Abbas only until 1615, when they were expelled by the Persians after a lengthy siege.

On the Arabian coast they maintained their hold more effectively, and in 1616, with the aid of a neighbouring tribe, they attacked and took Sohar, killing and plundering the garrison, their object being to destroy a port which competed with their two preserves of Muscat and Hormuz, and injuriously affected the Portuguese revenue from customs.

While the English Company was slowly but surely establishing itself in Persia, the Portuguese were engaged in fruitless attempts to propitiate Shah Abbas whom, already, they suspected of a design to expel them from Hormuz. Moreover, the successful trading operations of the English, in the vicinity, seriously affected the prosperity of Hormuz, and the arrival at Jask of a fleet of five English trading vessels produced consternation in Hormuz, where preparations were made for defence.

About 1620 the Portuguese were expelled by the Persians, assisted by an Arab levy, from a position they occupied on the

[1] Teixeira (2), pp. 22 and 24.

Arabian coast near Ras al Khaima. A Persian force, operating from the mainland of Persia, also seriously threatened the watering of Hormuz, by blockading the fort which the Portuguese had constructed on the neighbouring island of Qishm, whence Hormuz derived its water and other supplies.

At the end of 1620, two of the East India Company's ships, having been prevented from entering the port of Jask by a Portuguese fleet, returned to Surat, and, being reinforced by two other vessels, eventually entered Jask after a stiff skirmish between the fleets. The Portuguese squadron returned to Hormuz to refit and reappeared in greater strength off Jask, where a hotly contested action resulted in a signal victory for the English : the Portuguese, whose gunnery appears to have been particularly poor, had so much the worst of the encounter that, ' unwilling after so hotte a dinner to receive the like supper ', they cut their cables and drifted with the tide out of range, greatly damaged.[1] No further attempt was made by the Portuguese on this occasion to disturb the English traders, and having taken in about 520 bales of Persian silk for transmission to England, the Company's fleet returned to Surat, well content with their first serious encounter with their Portuguese rivals in the struggle for a ' place in the sun ' of the Gulf waters.

[1] Unfortunately, in this encounter the gallant commodore, Captain Shilling, was amongst the mortally wounded, for at the commencement of the action he was struck by a cannon-ball on the left shoulder, and after lingering, ' very godly and patient ', until 6th January 1621, ' about noone he departed this life, shewing himselfe, as ever before, a resolute commander, so now in his passage through the gates of death a most willing, humble, constant and assured Christian '. Herbert, in his inimitable manner, writes his epitaph thus : ' Here lies buried one Captaine Shilling, unfortunately slain by the insulting Portugall : but that his bones want sence and expression, they would tell you the earth is not worthy his receptable, and that the people are blockish, rude, treacherous and indomitable.' Herbert (1).

X

THE EXPULSION OF THE PORTUGUESE

'I must needs confess the like was never known, that one Christian warring against another, and then for to give the prey and all the benefit to the Heathen. . . . The Persians hath flourished gallantly since they have gotten Ormus in their custody, for Gombrun when I first knew it had but eighteen houses in it; and now it is a great City or Town as most in England, it may compare for commerce of trade, that there is not the like place in all Persia.' RICHARD BOOTHBY, *A Briefe Discovery*.

THE steps which the English were taking to establish themselves on a firm commercial footing in Persia, and the activity of the Persians on the mainland and islands adjacent to Hormuz, where their water and other supplies were threatened, had thoroughly aroused the Portuguese, and King Philip wrote again in 1618 to his Viceroy at Goa, urging him to put in order the fortifications of Hormuz. He was assured in reply that all necessary steps to this end had been taken.

By 1621 Shah Abbas, who had been at peace with Turkey since 1618 and had brought the neighbouring kingdom of Lar into subjection, felt ready to undertake the expulsion of the Portuguese from their stronghold of Hormuz, which he regarded as inconsistent with national honour and with the prosperity of his kingdom.

The Shah had doubtless received his earliest promptings to regain Hormuz from Sir Anthony Sherley, as early as the year 1600. Sir Anthony, at least at the outset of his mission to the Persian monarch, appears to have endeavoured to dissuade him from seeking the alliance of the powers of Christendom, which he sought in the hope of obtaining their assistance in his perennial wars against the Turks; and, instead, to concentrate his energies on the consolidation of his power at home.

In 1621, the time being ripe in his view, Abbas advanced his claims to the island through the Khan of Lar,[1] who asserted that

[1] 'Abas Xa King of Persia being bent on possessing himself of the Island and Kingdom of Ormus, Camberbeque, Cam of Lara began to undertake it, on pretence an ancient Tribute was not paid him, which he never had since Affonso de Albuquerque entred that Place. He hindred the Trade, and secured several Portugues Merchants; and seeing we did not agree with him about the Trade of his Silks, he settled it with James King of England, concluding a League with him for the taking of Ormus.' Faria y Sousa (2).

it had been tributary to Lar before the coming of Alboquerque: to this claim the Portuguese returned a direct repudiation. The Persians and the Portuguese were thus at open war. But the Persians were in little condition to undertake offensive operations. Even supposing that they could make any impression with their poor ordnance on the fortifications of Hormuz, they had first to solve the problem of how to maintain a besieging army on that barren island, while the Portuguese ships, under Ruy Freire, commanded the sea. As a first step, they blockaded the fort on the neighbouring island of Qishm which the Portuguese had recently constructed, opposite Hormuz, to ensure the dispatch of the water and supplies, upon which Hormuz depended for its very existence. Command of the operations was in the charge of Imam Quli, Khan of Shiraz, and matters were going none too well for the Persians.

As it happened, at this juncture a fleet of English vessels bound for Jask arrived from Surat, ostensibly in the course of ordinary commercial operations. The Khan was at Minab, and at once applied to the English commanders to join in the attack on Qishm and Hormuz, offering all sorts of inducements, and at the same time darkly hinting that should they refuse to help in a war—which had been largely provoked by the favour shown to the English by Shah Abbas—the privileges already granted might be withdrawn, and their silk, then on its way down to the coast from Isfahan, confiscated. The English were in a dilemma. They appear to have received a 'commission'[1] from the Council of Factors at Surat authorizing them, in view of the depredations and threats of the Portuguese, to capture ships of that nation and

[1] The real conditions under which these vessels sailed are given in the *Relation of the late Ormuz businesse, gathered out of the Journall of Master Edward Monox the Agent for the East Indian Merchants trading in Persia*, as follows: 'At a consultation in Swally Road the 14th November, 1621, commission was given by Master Thomas Rastell President, and the Counsell of the Merchants of Surat, to Richard Blithe, and John Weddell bound for Jasques (a Persian Port) with five good ships and foure Pinnaces (whereof the *London* and pinnace *Shilling* under Captaine Blithe; the *Jonas*, *Whale*, *Dolphin*, *Lion*, with their pinnaces the *Rose*, *Robert* and *Richard*, under command of Captaine Weddel) to set sayle with the soonest opportunitie towards Port Jasques, and to keep together in such sort as they should think fittest for their defence against the common enemie; and seeing the Portugals had disturbed their trade by the slaughter mayming and imprisoning of their men, and had made sundry assaults against their shipping, that therefore it should be lawfull to them to chase and surprize whatsoever vessels pertayning to the Ports, and Subiects under the Vice-roy of Goa, thereof to be accountable &c.' Purchas, vol. ii, p. 1793.

even, if a council of officers should consider it feasible, to attack them in their ports; but to attack the possessions of a European prince who was at this time on good terms with England, and to pit merchant vessels against two strong fortresses (to say nothing of Ruy Freire's galleons), was a totally different matter. The Company at home, too, was notoriously pacific and likely to disapprove of any warlike operations not actually thrust upon its servants. On the other hand, a refusal to co-operate meant the loss of their silk and the destruction of the trade which had been so painfully built up, but not yet established. After long debate, however, owing largely to the arguments of Monox, the Company's principal representative in Persia, it was decided to take part in the enterprise and to remove, once and for all if possible, the menace of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf.[1] Of this arrangement, Herbert quaintly writes:

'This poore Citie (Hormuz), was defrauded of her hopes, continuing glory, such time as Emangoly-Chawn (Imam Quli Khan), Duke of Shyras or Persepolis, tooke it with an Army of fifteene thousand men, by command of the King of Persia, who found himselfe bearded by the Portugall. Howbeit, they had neuer triumpht ouer them, had not some English Merchants ships (then too much abused by the bragging Lusitanian and so exasperated) helped them, by whose valour and Cannon, the City was sackt and depopulated. The Captaines (seruing the East India Merchants) were Captain Weddal, Blyth and Woodcocke.'[2]

The curious conditions of the pact entered into between the Persians and English, regarding the proposed assault, were, according to Herbert, as follows:

'That the Castle of Ormus (in case it were won) with all the Ordnance and Ammunition should belong unto the English; That the Persians might build another Castle in the Isle at their own cost, when they were pleased; That the spoil should be equally divided; That the Christian prisoners be disposed by the English, the Pagans by the Persians; That the Persians should allow for half charge of victuals, wages, shot, powder &c.; That the English should be Custom-free in Bander-gum-broon (Bandar Abbas) for ever.'[3]

The articles signed, each party prepared for fight. Some trouble was experienced in persuading the English sailors to take part in the enterprise, some 'alleaging it was no merchandizing businesse, nor were they hired for any such exploit'; but by means of threats and persuasions (including a promise of a month's extra pay) the malcontents were silenced, and on 19th January 1622 the ships put out to sea from Jask. On the 22nd they anchored

[1] Foster (2). [2] Herbert (1), p. 46. [3] Herbert (2), p. 109.

off Hormuz, where the Portuguese squadron, consisting of five galleons, two small ships, and a number of frigates, rode under the shelter of the castle.

The English had hoped that the enemy ships would come out for a straightforward encounter. This, however, they showed no inclination to do, so the fleet passed on to Qishm and anchored off the Portuguese fort, which was in command of Ruy Freire. Already hard pressed by the besieging Persians on the land side, and now attacked by the English fleet, after the landing of five guns and the construction of a battery, the Portuguese surrendered, and Ruy Freire and his chief subordinates were taken prisoners. The English casualties in this action were few—three men killed and two wounded. But, unfortunately, among the former was William Baffin, master of the *London*, the skilled navigator famous in the history of Arctic exploration and the discoverer of Baffin's Bay.[1]

A Persian garrison was installed in Qishm fort, with four Englishmen to keep up the fiction of a joint occupation, and the fleet then moved over to Gombrun to prepare for the larger enterprise of attacking Hormuz itself. Ruy Freire and the other prisoners were sent to Surat.

On 9th February the English ships, accompanied by about two hundred Persian boats, sailed from Gombrun and anchored off Hormuz city. Next day a large force of Persian soldiers, under the Imam Quli, was landed, took possession of the island, and drove the Portuguese into their Castle, which stood in a strong position on a spit of land projecting into the sea. On 24th February the *San Pedro*, the largest of the Portuguese galleons, was set ablaze by a fire-boat and drifted out to sea a ruined carcass. The Persians, on their side, mined vigorously, and on 17th March they made a practicable breach and an assault, but were repulsed by the Portuguese, who fought with great bravery. By command of the Imam Quli the Persians then set fire to the city, because

[1] 'Master Baffin went on shoare with his Geometricall Instruments, for the taking the height and distance of the Castle wall, for the better leauelling of his Peece to make his shot; but as he was about the same, he receiued a smal shot from the Castle into his belly, wherewith he gave three leapes, by report, and died immediately.' Purchas, vol. ii, p. 1792.

A correspondent writing in the *Journal of the Central Asian Society*, 1927, xiv. 3, reports the existence, near the town of Qishm, of a grave, reputed to be that of an English governor who died in battle, which is not improbably that of Baffin. 'It has', he writes, 'been kept in good repair by the shaikhs of the island . . . and I left sufficient money to have it built up from the sea.'

a. THE BRITISH MINISTER, TEHRAN (MR. MURRAY), AND HIS SUITE

b. GOMBRUN

c. HORMUZ, LARAK, AND QISHM

his soldiers 'tarried amongst the flesh-pots' in the town and could not be rallied to the attack.

The Persian army[1] was, however, soon reduced almost to a state of famine, and the little water found in the cisterns of the city was consumed, so that, had the English ships been driven off by a Portuguese squadron which was daily expected to arrive, the situation of the besiegers would have become very critical, since they had to send daily for supplies to the mainland; they were also badly provided with arms, 'having only small pieces, with bows and arrows and swords; some of their chiefs had coats of mail'. The patience of the English was much tried by the conduct of the Persian general, who 'broke conditions with them in several things', held conferences with the Portuguese without communicating with the English, and was guilty of other breaches of faith.

By the beginning of April the Portuguese garrison were getting short of provisions and suffering from sickness. Unsuccessful assaults were made by the besiegers until, on the 19th, the allies got possession of the entire outer wall, and forced the Portuguese to retire farther within the castle. On the 21st April the Portuguese made overtures to the English, who received letters from their military commander and admiral, requesting their mediation with the Persian general, and saying that, if forced to surrender, as soon they must be, they would call upon the English for that purpose, as 'it is not reason we should treate with Moores where you are present'.[2] The English commanders guaranteed that lives should be spared, and obtained a truce for two days to draw up conditions. On the 23rd the Portuguese surrendered themselves to the English on the condition of being sent to Muscat or India, and the Portuguese flag was lowered after floating for more than a century over Alboquerque's castle.[3]

On the English side, only twenty lives are said to have been lost, but the Persian casualties are set down at a thousand. The garrison, numbering about 3,000 with women and children, was sent by the English to Muscat and Sohar,[4] 'the greatest number

[1] Accounts differ as to its strength. According to Captain Alexander Hamilton, who may be regarded generally as a trustworthy authority, it numbered 'forty or fifty thousand, with Frankies for Transports'. Vol. i, p. 103.

[2] Purchas, vol. ii, p. 1800. [3] Low.

[4] That the English honourably kept their part of the agreement is shown in 'A Certificate from the Portugalls, of their kind usage, wherein was performed more then was promised them'. The signatories, 'with others doe witnesse, how it is true the English Captaines have performed their promise made upon

of them so weakened with severall sorts of maladies, but chiefeley with famine, and many so noysome both to themselves and others with their putrified wounds and scaldings with Gunpowder, and so pittifull were their several complaints and cries, that it would have moved a heart of stone to pittie them '.[1]

Upon the surrender of the fortress a general pillage ensued, despite the fact that, according to Herbert, ' the Magazines of Arms, Victuals, and Treasure were sealed up with the Signets of both Nations '.[2] Perfidy appears not to have been confined entirely to one side, for ' the interim, contrary to agreement, was imployed by the Persian in massacring of more than half-dead men, . . . polluting Temples and defacing houses. During which an Englishman (contrary to order) breaks into a Monastery, but in his return is descried by the ratling of his burthensome sacriledge; at which the Persians (judging the agreement broken) fall to plunder every thing that was valuable.' [3] Monox also relates that ' the Persians and English began to pillage in such sort that I was both grieved and ashamed to see it; but could devise no remedy at all for it.' There was, in fact, no orderly division of the spoil of Hormuz as contemplated in the Anglo-Persian agreement, and the net result was that the Persians secured the lion's share, for what the English did manage to secure, as the Company's part, had perforce to be sold at low prices owing to the small number of buyers available.[4]

Nor were other conditions of the agreement better observed. The Persians refused to divide the ordnance with the English, maintaining that it must be left in the castle for the purposes of joint defence; and they also objected to any Englishman remaining in the fortress unless the commanders would undertake to leave two ships on guard there. Further, they presented a bill for

yeelding up of the Castle, by giving two of their owne ships or pinnasses to carry away all the people whither they would goe, also by defending them, that at no time neither Moore nor Infidell should do them any hurt : . . . and more, they have given hospitality to our sicke and wounded, which are neere about two hundred at the least, whom they have sustained and cured with as great care and diligence, as if they had beene their owne brothers.' Purchas, vol. ii, p. 1803.

[1] Details of the siege of Hormuz are given by various writers. There are the narratives of Pinder, Wilson, and Monox, in Purchas, vol. ii. Other valuable contemporary accounts will be found in Della Valle, Herbert, Fryer, and Tavernier, none of which, however, are altogether free of inaccuracies. There is an account, from the Portuguese standpoint, in the *Asia Portuguesa* of Faria y Sousa, of which work there is a somewhat abridged translation, *The Portugues Asia*, by Captain John Stevens; and other works.

[2] Herbert (2). [3] *Idem*. [4] Foster (3).

water, provisions, &c., supplied to the fleet, which left but little balance. On the whole, the conviction was general in the fleet that the English had been shamefully treated, and, later, when the Shah's general applied to the commanders to complete their work by attacking Muscat, the refusal was polite but emphatic.[1]

Sickness took its toll of victims among the English too. 'After our businesse ended,' says Monox, 'our misery began, occasioned by the unsufferable heat, and partly by the disorders of our owne people in drinking Rack,[2] and using other excesses no lesse hurtfull: whereby grew such a mortalitie, that three fourths of our men were dangerously sicke, and many died so suddenly, that they feared the plague, whereof yet no tokens appeared.' In the end, for these reasons, the English ships left Hormuz, and on the 1st September 1622 arrived at Surat.

When all is considered, it is difficult to discover what material gain came to the English in this action. They handed back Hormuz to the Persians, who even went so far as to refuse them a share in its occupation; while the proceeds of the sale of the booty acquired seems not even to have covered their expenses. On the other hand, they succeeded admirably, as the sequel shows, in making implacable enemies of the Portuguese. Richard Boothby,[3] a merchant, refers to the joint action taken by the English and Persians for the capture of Hormuz, and blames those in charge on the spot for giving the Persians possession of this immensely valuable place without referring the matter home. Hormuz, he says, did more trade in its best days than London and Amsterdam combined. He comments on the intense bitterness of the Portuguese against the English, in consequence of their joining with the Persians to wrest Hormuz from them.

With this opinion the historian of the twentieth century cannot but agree. The participation of the English in the attack upon Hormuz was clearly without diplomatic justification, for England and Spain were at peace when the pact with the Persians was made. Protests were made by the Spanish Crown,[4] and it seemed likely that the Company's action might be repudiated by the English Government, and their servants treated as pirates. The Company, however, resolved 'to stand on their innocency', and

[1] *Idem.*

[2] Arak—spirit distilled from dates.

[3] *A Briefe Discovery, or Description of the most famous Island of Madagascar*, by Richard Boothby, Merchant, London, 1646. (A reprint of this rare work is to be found in *Churchill's Collection of Voyages*, vol. viii, pp. 1707–47.)

[4] The Spanish and Portuguese Crowns were united from 1580 to 1640.

Monox, their chief agent in the affair (who in the meanwhile had returned to England), put forward various grounds of defence, principally 'the commission of His Majesty to defend and offend' the aggressions of the Portuguese in the Gulf; and he further advanced the plea of compulsion by the Shah, who had threatened to place an embargo on English trade in Persia if they refused to participate in his design. In the end, satisfaction was refused to the King of Spain; but the Company were obliged to placate King James with the gift of £10,000 and to pay to the Duke of Buckingham, as Lord High Admiral, a like sum. A formal grant was made to the Company of all goods and *materiel* taken by its servants in the Eastern seas, with a pardon to every one concerned in the hostilities.[1]

The power of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf, though not totally destroyed by the fall of Hormuz, was broken: the English on the other hand, for the time being, found in Hormuz a free port more convenient than Jask for the prosecution of their trade. Though various clauses of the agreement made by Shah Abbas to obtain the aid of the English in the conquest of Hormuz were totally disregarded by him, he nevertheless, in a general way, confirmed the farman he had granted to Connock in 1617, which allowed the English to purchase whatever quantity of Persian silks they might think proper in any part of Persia and to bring their goods to Isfahan without paying duties.

The Persians were desirous of following up the success of Hormuz by taking Muscat, the strongest remaining foothold of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf, but as the English withheld their assistance—their ardour being cooled by the view taken of the Hormuz episode at home—they were unable to do so. The Persians, however, succeeded in occupying Sohar and Khor Fakkan on the Oman coast, but Ruy Freire having escaped from captivity and English support being no longer forthcoming, the Portuguese once more assumed the offensive, drove them from these two towns, destroyed places on the Persian coast between Jask and Gombrun, harried Persian shipping in general, and even endeavoured to cut off the supplies of Hormuz. The forces at Ruy Freire's disposal were, however, insufficient to admit of a continuous blockade of Hormuz or of a direct attack upon it.

The once famous city of Hormuz, thus handed over to the Persians, was soon stripped of all that was of value, and, like Tyre

[1] *Calendar of State Papers* (*Colonial*), 1622–4, No. 303.

and Babylon, was within a few short years tenanted only by owls and jackals. The small island, whose luxury and wealth were once proverbial, which is said to have boasted a population of forty thousand souls, and was one of the chief marts for the commerce of the ' gorgeous East ', is now a barren rock, inhabited by some two hundred souls, who eke out a precarious existence by the sale of the salt which forms the main staple of commerce,[1] and by mining red oxide for export to Europe.

The Persians continued to occupy Hormuz with a small garrison till the overthrow of the Portuguese by a combined fleet of English and Dutch ships, in 1625. The decay of the city was then rapid. In a document of the East India Company, we read :

' Concerning Ormuz it appears that the Persian hath had hitherto no intent to re-inhabit it, but purpose to make Gombroon his port, the King having pulled down houses and given orders not to leave one stone upon another, yet he holdeth still the castle of Ormuz with about 300 soldiers therein, which the Portugals, with about 20 frigates have besieged, and burnt most of the boats along the coast, whereby trade in that place is not to be prosecuted.' [2]

Sir Thomas Herbert, who visited Hormuz about the year 1627, but five short years after its capture, was an eyewitness of its rapid decay. He says :

' At the end of the Ile appeare yet the ruines of that late glorious Citie, built by the Portugals, but under command of a Titular King a Moore. Twas once as bigge as Exeter, the buildings faire, and spacious, with some Monasteries, and a large Buzzar, or Market. . . . This poore Citie is now disrobed of all her brauerie, the Persians each moneth conueigh her ribs of wood and stone, to agrandize Gombrone, not three leagues distant, out of whose ruines, shee begins to triumph. In a word, this poore place, not now worth the owning, was but ten yeares agoe, the only stately City, in the Orient, if we may beleeve this uniuersall Prouerbe.' [3]

Shah Abbas, overjoyed at his conquest, formed magnificent plans for a great seaport on the mainland of his kingdom. He fixed on the formerly insignificant fishing village of Gombrun as the site, and gave his own name to the place, commanding it to be called Bandar Abbasi, or the Port of Abbas,[4] a place destined

[1] Low.

[2] *Calendar of State Papers* (*East Indies*), 1625–9.

[3] Herbert (1), pp. 46–7. See foot-note, p. 101.

[4] Amongst Persians the form Bandar Abbasi is still in common use, though the European form of Bandar Abbas is more frequently used now than a quarter of a century ago.

to figure very prominently in the history of the Gulf. To the newly founded port was diverted the trade and population of the dead island city. Permission was given to the East India Company to ' occupy two houses at Gombrun ', but not to build a house, ' lest they should turn it into a castle '. The English, indeed, found here a port of ingress for their goods into Persia more convenient than Jask, by the best, though not the shortest, road leading from the coast to the Persian capital. For a century and a half Bandar Abbas remained the principal foothold of the East India Company on the shores of the Persian Gulf.

XI

THE DUTCH

'Such was the success wherewith they gained everything, it looked as if the World had chose them to be Universal Lords. Nor did they seem to be sent as Souldiers, with Arms to wage War, but as Legislators, with power to give Laws. Who then will admire that the whole circumference of the Earth should submit to so small a number of such Heroick Spirits, they being rather led by Auspicious Fates, than Valiant Generals? Never had they fallen from their height, had not their own oversights, and distractions been the cause of their fall, that Divine Goodness that had so much exalted being no longer able to bear with them. This will oblige me to relate some things, which it were more proper, for the Honour of my Country, should be buried in oblivion than published.' FARIA Y SOUSA, *Asia Portuguesa*.

THE remaining history of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf is soon told. Their eviction from Hormuz, by the unauthorized and indeed lawless enterprise of a few stout-hearted men in command of an English merchant fleet which happened to be on the spot, proved fatal to their maritime power in these waters, and may well be regarded as the first step towards the destruction of their wider Empire in the Indies. 'There are three places in India', says Alboquerque, 'which serve as marts of all the commerce of merchantable wares in that part of the world, and the principal keys of it. The first is Malacca . . . at the exit of the Straits of Singapara. . . . The second is Adem in the entry and exit of the Straits of the Red Sea. The third is Ormuz at the entry and exit of the Straits of the Persian Sea. This city of Ormuz is, according to my idea, the most important of them all. And if the King of Portugal had made himself master of Adem, with a good fortress, such as those of Ormuz and Malacca, and so held the sway over these three Straits, which I have specified, he might well have been called the lord of all the world—as did Alexander when he penetrated to the Ganges—for with these three keys in his hands, he might shut the doors against all comers.'[1] One such key position and the command of one, at least, of the three straits of the 'Indian Seas' had, in truth, been irretrievably lost.

To compensate in some measure for the loss, the Portuguese made Muscat, on the opposite coast, where they had built forts of great strength, the centre of their activities in the Gulf, both trading and missionary; but, not being a purely maritime post like Hormuz, it was open to 'stabs in the back' from the tur-

[1] *The Commentaries*, iv, p. 185.

bulent native population of Oman, and proved, ere long, a very troublesome possession. In a more peaceful way the Portuguese maintained a considerable hold on Basra: Faria y Sousa tells us that, 'after the loss of Ormus, they settled their Trade in this City, and founded a Seminary of Learning',[1] and until the year 1640, at least, they carried on at Basra a serious competition with English trade. They made an ineffectual attempt to recapture Hormuz in 1625, and the same year established a factory and built a fort at Kung,[2] on the Persian coast, which place, as long as they had the power to compel vessels to call there, enjoyed a large measure of commercial prosperity. In 1630 the Portuguese Viceroy at Goa, having received a reinforcement of nine ships and two thousand soldiers, again projected the recapture of Hormuz Island, but the scheme came to naught.

As time went on, the Portuguese felt more and more the loss of their main *point d'appui* in the Gulf. In 1631, in desperation, the King of Spain sent instructions to his Viceroy that he should endeavour to come to terms with the governor of Hormuz, by bribery if necessary, with a view to recovering possession of the place for the Crown of Portugal. One Valdez was thereupon sent to confer with Ruy Freire, the commander of the fort of Muscat, to this end; but the mission failed in its object and the Portuguese, instead, had to be content with establishing a fort at Julfa (Ras al Khaima), on the Arabian coast, about fifty leagues from Muscat.

Towards 1640 troubles began to fall thick and fast upon the Portuguese, in the Gulf. Certain Arabs in the Custom House at Muscat having informed the Imam of Oman that the Portuguese fort there was in a very undefended state owing to the majority of the garrison being away with the fleet, he attacked the place, but was repulsed with considerable loss. This was but the prelude of more serious attacks. In 1643 the Imam took Sohar, which had been in Portuguese hands for some twenty years. The final blow, however, to their prestige fell in 1648–9. A large Arab

[1] Faria y Sousa (2).

[2] Now only a small coast town, about four miles north-east of Lingeh, of under 2,000 inhabitants. There are extensive mounds and ruins of the old town of two or three hundred years ago. Kung is not a place of great antiquity, and it appears to have risen to importance only after the expulsion of the Portuguese from Hormuz, when they established a settlement here, and it seems, in the end, to have become their head-quarters in the Persian Gulf and a place of some trade. The walls of the old Portuguese factory were still standing at the end of the last century, but in a very tottering condition. Opposite it stands a round fort of good masonry which is surrounded by the sea at high water.

force under the Yaariba ruler of Oman, Said bin Khalifa, commenced a regular siege of Muscat, which was prolonged for over two months, when the besieged capitulated. Peace was arranged on the following hard terms: The Portuguese should raze to the ground the forts of Quryat, Sur, and Matra, and the Imam should similarly destroy the Arab fort at the latter place; Matra should belong to neither, and both parties were to be free to remove their artillery and baggage; Arab vessels should be free to navigate outwards without reserve, but on the homeward voyage with passes from the Portuguese; the subjects of the Imam should pay no duties, either personal or upon merchandise entering or leaving Muscat; commerce should be entirely and unrestrictedly free; and the Arabs should destroy all fortifications erected during the siege, while the Portuguese should not build anything upon the site of their demolished works. Such terms imposed upon Dom Julião de Noronha, the Captain-General of Muscat, clearly involved the financial ruin of the Portuguese settlement in Oman and the collapse of their supremacy there: there was no alternative to acceptance. The end, after this, was not long delayed. Towards the close of 1649 Muscat was again in a state of siege, and, no proper watch being kept, a body of Arabs entered the town by night and invested the Portuguese factory and one of the forts. The Portuguese commander, hard pressed, retired into the fort, and, being separated from the bulk of his arms, ammunition, and supplies, surrendered on the 23rd January 1650.[1] A fleet dispatched by the Viceroy of Goa to relieve the town arrived too late; the Portuguese evacuated Oman and lost their entire hold on the Arabian shore. The Imam Sultan bin Saif, fired with his success, organized a *jihad* and carried the war into the enemy's camp; he attacked Diu and other places on the Guzerat coast, to the great consternation of the Portuguese, and carried off immense booty.

By the loss of Muscat the Portuguese were deprived of their last stronghold in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf. The Viceroy sent a fleet of ships to the Gulf early in 1652, and when off Muscat it encountered an Arab armada which had taken up a position under the guns of the fortress of Muscat. It was alleged

[1] The date of the capture of Muscat is a point on which authorities differ. Badger says: 'The date of the capture of Maskat from the Portuguese has never been correctly ascertained; unfortunately, our author also omits to record it. Judging from the chronology of other events which transpired during the reign of Sultan bin Seif, I have fixed it between 1651–2.' Badger, p. xxvii.

that the Portuguese might then have easily destroyed the Arab vessels and even recaptured the town; but the commander seems to have shirked an encounter, and thus missed an opportunity, which never recurred, of re-establishing Portuguese power. Their sole remaining foothold in the Persian Gulf was, as stated above, the modest port of Kung, and even this place slipped eventually from their grasp. Hold on their larger possessions in India and farther to the East was weakening also, in face of the strenuous competition of the English and Dutch—whose methods differed widely from their own—on the one hand, and the growing hostility to their pretensions of the Arabs and of the natives of India on the other.[1]

The decline of Portuguese power in the East may be assigned to several causes; principally to their violence and bad faith in dealing with the Oriental peoples with whom they had relations, but also to internal jealousies and dissensions. Their mercantile operations, which were inefficiently conducted as a royal monopoly, could not withstand the competition of the English and Dutch merchants, organized as trading companies. Their power depended on a military organization which, in the end, was undermined by lack of discipline and of leadership. The ascendancy of the English and Dutch companies, on the other hand, was the triumph of an individualistic system over a state monopoly, and is consequently of interest to the student of affairs in the twentieth century.

Regarding the low level of Portuguese naval discipline and their arbitrary methods at sea, an interesting side-light is thrown by Della Valle, the Italian traveller, who, notwithstanding his marked Catholic sympathies, could not forbear from contrasting what he saw on Portuguese vessels with the conditions that prevailed on board English vessels. He observes:

'January the one and thirtieth (1627), As we were sailing (from Muscat) with a small wind, we descry'd a Sail a far off, which seeing us, discharg'd a Gun, as a sign for us to stay till it came up to us: whence we understood it to be one of Ruy Freira's Fleet; for by custom the Ships of war in India do thus, and other Merchant-Ships are obliged to stay and obey; if not, the War-ship may sink them. Accordingly we stay'd, and by the help of Oars it presently made towards us. Wherein I observ'd the little Military Discipline, and good order practis'd by the Portugals in India. . . . This vessel of the Armada demanded of us water and Mariners. Now amongst

[1] They were expelled from Mombasa in 1698, and from Pemba and Kilwa soon after.

XI. MUSCAT, *c.* 1670

the Portugals, 'tis a custom for these War-ships to take from Merchants which they meet what they please, either by fair means or by foul; although 'tis but a disorderly thing, and many inconveniences happen by it. Of water we gave them two barrels, but no Mariners, because we had few enough for our selves.' [1]

Their own authors also have much to say on the 'Ruin of India', as they termed the downfall of the Portuguese, and it is these writers who censure their methods in the strongest terms. Faria y Sousa,[2] while bearing testimony to their enterprise, speaks of

'the Portugueses endeavouring to gather wealth, but not providing the means to defend it. The Ruine of our Affairs proceeds from the little regard the great ones have for the lesser sort; and the covetousness of the small ones, which made them forget their Country and their Honour. . . . The Portugueses can recover what is lost, but know not how to preserve what they gain, which is the most glorious part, it being the Work of Fortune to gain, and that of Prudence to preserve.'

With these weighty verdicts, which the reader can scarcely fail to apply to the times in which we live, we conclude our examination of the tragic end of the Portuguese adventure, and turn our attention to subsequent developments.

The coming of the Dutch. The disappearance of the Portuguese from the field of contest did not relieve the English from political and commercial rivalry in the Gulf: they had still to face the dangerous hostility, both commercial and political, of the Dutch.

To Jan Huyghen van Linschoten, son of a burgher of Haarlem, the Dutch were indebted for the information which first led to their entering upon the East Indian trade, at the end of the sixteenth century. For a considerable period prior to 1595—when the Netherlands were subject to the Crown of Spain, and Philip II attempted to crush Dutch trade by adopting stringent measures for stopping all commercial intercourse between the two countries, by seizing Dutch ships in Spanish waters—the Dutch had only an indirect trade with India and the East, through Lisbon. It was the obvious policy of Philip to exclude the Dutch from intercourse with the Portuguese settlements in the East. This prohibition, instead of depressing the adventurous spirit of the Hollanders, who had learnt of the large gains of the Portu-

[1] Della Valle (3), p. 236.

[2] Faria y Sousa (2).

guese, in the spice trade in particular, only served to stimulate them to embark upon *direct* communication with the East.

Linschoten went to India in 1583, in the suite of the Archbishop of Goa, and remained there for nearly thirteen years. He collected a vast amount of information regarding the products which formed the material of a great traffic, the means of transportation, and the course of commerce. Returning in 1592, he published the results of his researches, and added a practical manual for navigators, describing the course from Lisbon to the East, the currents, trade-winds, harbours, islands, shoals, &c., of the Indian seas, with maps and charts.[1]

Soon after Linschoten's return, the merchants of Amsterdam deputed one Cornelis Houtman, who had made several voyages to India in Portuguese ships, to go to Lisbon to make further investigations regarding the East Indian trade. On his return to Holland in 1594, he offered to conduct a fleet by way of the Cape, and to introduce his countrymen to the Indian commerce. The merchants provided the funds for such an expedition, dispatching a fleet of four ships, in 1598, to ' the countries lying on the other side of the Cape of Good Hope ', under Houtman's command. He returned in 1597, having lost two-thirds of his crews and one vessel, which had to be burnt, and done little in actual trade. But he brought back a treaty with the King of Bantam which opened up the East Indian Archipelago and the road thither, to Holland. The Dutch successively equipped other considerable fleets: between 1598 and 1601 no fewer than fifteen such doubled the Cape. By these enterprises they gradually acquired not only a share of the trade, but eventually made conquests of several of the Portuguese settlements in India, and thus (during the union of Portugal and Spain, 1580–1620) became the rivals of Portuguese and English[2] and, ultimately, the subverters of the Portuguese power in India.

[1] Linschoten's *Itinerario*, 1596.

[2] ' First the Portingalls (being great Merchants by reason of their skil in Nauigation which in our dayes is growne to a more full perfection than euer it hath beene in times past): they, I say, first discovered the Wast and Desert part of the Indies. . . . But here the Matter stayed not: For then came the English (a people that in the Art of Nauigation giueth place to none other) and they were incited to take this Indian Voyage in hande, and to make it generally knowne vnto their Island. . . . And last of all, the People of the Lowe-Countreys being instructed by the diligent search and trauell of the English Nation, fell to the like trafficke into the Indies and haue performed many Honourable and profitable Voyages.' Linschoten, Old English translation of 1598.

The success of Houtman led to the formation of several trading associations in the Netherlands, which in 1597 were merged into 'The Society for Trade to distant Countries'. From about this date the trading activities of the Dutch company march *pari passu* with those of the English traders. In 1602 the Dutch States found it expedient to consolidate the various rival societies of East India adventurers into one powerful company, and to constitute, by royal patent, 'The Dutch East India Company', with exclusive privileges for twenty years. The Company became a national force, and, before many years were out, trade between the Netherlands and the East had become fully established, though as yet no Dutch ship had appeared in the Persian Gulf.

In 1599, having succeeded in establishing a firm footing in the far Eastern trade, the Dutch suddenly raised the price of pepper against the English, from three shillings a pound to six, and then to eight shillings a pound. This operation—following on the stimulus to enterprise which the published travels of Ralph Fitch and Linschoten[1] had induced in England—though small in itself, is noteworthy, for it was largely this incident that stirred the merchants of London to adopt measures of protection, and led to the establishment of our own East India Company (see Chap. IX).

It was not long before the conflicting interests of the English and Dutch Companies became apparent. An early conflict arose over the spice and pepper trade. The favourite object of the Dutch, in the early days, was, if possible, to monopolize the whole of the trade in these valuable commodities, and, indeed, if the accounts of the profits in Europe by the importation of them can be relied on, they formed the most valuable articles of an East India cargo. The Portuguese were the first opponents of the Dutch in this trade; now it became the turn of the English.

It is not our concern to trace in detail the development of Dutch conquest in India and the East Indies, but to consider only those of their commercial and political activities in the Persian Gulf—ancillary to, and the mere reflection of, their wider activities—which brought the Dutch into conflict, first with the

[1] A translation of Linschoten's work into English appeared in 1598 under the title, *The Voyage of John Huyghen van L. to the E. Indies*. The preface to this edition sounded like a trumpet call, and gave a great impulse to the founding of the East India Company. It speaks of the 'great provinces, puissant cities, and unmeasurable islands' of the Indies. 'I doo not doubt, but yet I doo most heartily pray and wish that this poore Translation may worke in our English nation a further desire and increase of honour over all Countreys of the Worlde' by means of 'our Wodden Walles'.

Portuguese, and then with the English, and who themselves were throughout rivals of each other.[1] It is, however, of no little interest to the student of affairs in 1927 to note the amalgamation, more than three centuries ago, of small trading concerns into large groups, followed by fusion into a single monopolistic concern, with national backing, and to observe the result—international complications followed by open war.

But to return to more local affairs. The centre of interest now shifts from Hormuz (after its loss by the Portuguese and demolition by the Persians) to Bandar Abbas. Here, it will be remembered, the factors of the East India Company established a factory in 1623, and here the Dutch almost immediately put in an appearance, to the alarm of the Company's agents. The circumstances of their coming to the Persian Gulf must be associated with the help they afforded the English in defeating the Portuguese fleet in a series of small actions off Bandar Abbas. They then applied themselves to extorting from the Shah—much occupied at the moment in defending Baghdad, which was besieged by the Turks—a grant for a proportion of the silk trade.

The advantage they so secured was a source of real alarm to the English Company, already aware of the seriousness of Dutch rivalry farther East and of their unscrupulous methods, which had culminated in the Massacre of Amboyna in 1623. 'The Dutch purpose to close', said President Fursland, in a letter to the East India Company, 'all those places hitherto free to the English, striving to make us as odious to all the world as them-

[1] For a true comprehension, however, of the state of affairs in the wider East from 1600 onwards to the end of the century, it will be well to state briefly the successive steps which led to the ascendancy of the Dutch in the Eastern seas. In 1602 the fleet of the Dutch Company routed the Portuguese near Bantam and laid open the road to the Moluccas, or Spice Islands. In 1603 they threatened the Portuguese settlement of Goa. The exclusive possession of the Spice Islands became a fixed point in Dutch policy. The instructions to their first Governor-General (1609–14) were that 'The Commerce of the Moluccas, Amboyna and Banda should belong to the Company, and that no other nation in the world should have the least part'. Having made themselves a power in Java, midway between the Malay States and the Moluccas, they fixed their capital at Batavia, on its northern coast, in 1619. In 1641 they captured Malacca on the Malay peninsula from the Portuguese, and thus turned the Straits into a Dutch water-way. From 1638 onward, they expelled the Portuguese from Ceylon, driving them from their last stronghold in 1658. They took possession of the great half-way house of Indo-European commerce, the Cape of Good Hope, and settled a colony there in 1652. When Portugal freed herself from Spanish domination, in 1640, her power in the East had already, to all intents and purposes, passed to the Dutch. (Hunter.)

selves are. They are grown a most cruel and bloody people, and have lately in these parts committed such inhuman acts, in murdering all they meet abroad, as well friends as foes, that it is abominable before God and man, and we hope your worships will seek to clear yourselves from the conjunction of such inhuman people.'[1] Sir Thomas Roe also, in a letter to the East India Company dated 1617, said of the Dutch: 'They wrong you in all Parts and grow to insufferable insolences'; and in another letter dated November 1624, said that 'he had tried them, East and West, and knew their beastiality and ingratitude'.[2]

Nevertheless, in 1625 the Dutch made common cause with the English in a sea fight (referred to on p. 151) against a Portuguese fleet under Alvarez Botello, which made a last effort to retake Hormuz. The Portuguese vessels were severely handled, but the English and Dutch were unable to follow them when they drew off. Though the Dutch had co-operated with the English in this action, their intentions were, nevertheless, much distrusted by the Company's servants—who suspected them of intriguing with the Persians to obtain possession of deserted Hormuz—and justifiably, as subsequent events proved. English trade in Persia was already at such a low ebb, in 1625, that Thomas Kerridge, the chief agent at Isfahan, resolved to wind up the affairs of the Company there; but after consultations with the other agents at Bandar Abbas it was resolved to renew the trade until further advice to the contrary, not only in regard of the privileges obtained, but also 'for that the Dutch have intruded themselves and scandalized our intendments unto the Sophy'. Thus the disappearance of the Portuguese from the field by no means relieved the English from commercial and political rivalry: on the contrary, as the power of the Portuguese declined, that of the Dutch increased, and at length became even more dangerous to them.[3]

Established at Bandar Abbas, the Dutch declined to pay customs there. This action directly affected the English, as they had received the right from the Shah to the moiety of customs dues at this port. The Dutch persisted in their refusal, and this proved

[1] *Calendar of State Papers* (*East Indies*), 1622–4.

[2] Such letters might well have been, and doubtless were, penned from Canton in 1926.

[3] A somewhat similar situation arose after the Great War in Persia, where the elimination of German influence served rather to increase Russian influence than to consolidate that of Great Britain.

a source of constant friction between the two parties throughout the period under review.[1]

By 1627 the situation of the English Company's affairs in Persia had become precarious. The Shah was occupied in defending Baghdad against the Turks, with the result that the internal affairs of Persia were in a state of turmoil. The Dutch took advantage of this unsettled state of affairs by extorting a grant for a proportion of the silk trade, on terms rather more favourable than those which had been granted to the English. At the same time, farther East, they were taking continued measures to ruin the Company's trade in Java and Sumatra, and excluding them from China and Siam.

In 1629 Shah Abbas died, and the English lost a firm friend and active supporter. In Persia, on the death of a sovereign, all contracts become void unless confirmed by his successor, and, as this took time to effect, English trade suffered. The Dutch seized upon the opportunity and, by resorting to bribery and paying high prices for Persian commodities, strove assiduously to oust the English from the position which they had so painfully won in the Gulf; while the English agents hesitated to raise the question of a fresh contract for silk with the new Shah, though one was desired, fearing they would be outbidden by the Dutch. Though a new farman was eventually procured from Shah Safi, the full privileges of the Company were not renewed and confirmed until

[1] The question of the English moiety of the Bandar Abbas customs payable by agreement to the Company was a perennial cause of dispute between the East India Company and the Persian Government during the period under consideration. In the earlier years the yield was disappointingly small; in some years this was due to bad trade, but the frauds and negligence of the Persians, and even of the Company's own servants, and refusal of payment by the Dutch were factors of greater import. At various times it was estimated that the English share, if it could be recovered in full, would amount to considerably over £15,000 a year, but according to Mandelslo, one of the embassy from the Duke of Holstein, who passed through Bandar Abbas in 1638, 'they were receiving about one-tenth of their just dues'. After many abortive attempts to remedy the matter and to obtain payment of arrears, it was suggested in 1676 that, if possible, 1,000 tumans a year should be obtained in lieu of the moiety of the customs, and from that date this arrangement remained in force, at least in theory.

'The Hollanders pay no duties, according to a priviledge they obtain'd of Schah Abbas, and whereof they endeavour all they can to preserve the enjoyment by the presents they ever and anon make to the Officers of the Court of Persia: But the English are so far from paying anything, that on the contrary they enjoy many other priviledges and exemptions, and should by right receive one half of the Customes, but they have hardly the tenth part allowed them, nay, are obliged to take that little which they have in Commodities.' Mandelslo (2).

1632, and were then only rendered effectual by annual presents of fine cloth and cutlery, &c., to the Shah and his principal officers, to the value of over a thousand pounds sterling.

In the meantime, the Dutch had effectively established themselves and built a factory at Bandar Abbas, the whole spice trade was in their hands, and they had obtained exemption from the payment of import duty. 'The Dutch are the better settled there of the two,' wrote Mandelslo in 1638, 'and do furnish in a manner all Persia with Pepper, Nutmegs, Cloves and other Spicery. The English do either sell or truck their English cloathes, Tinne, Steel, Indico, silk-stuffs, and Cottons out of the Indies.' Thus it seems, by 1639–40, the Dutch had attained to a definite superiority in the Persian Gulf; Dutch shipping and goods predominated at Bandar Abbas; and in 1641, in their efforts to monopolize the export trade of Persia, they were selling European goods in the country below cost price. Moreover, the Portuguese were making a last effort to revive their trade and influence in the Gulf.

In the year 1639–40 an English ship was dispatched to Basra by the Company on a voyage of experiment, with the object, if possible, of opening trade at a port not subject to Persia, at which it might be more practicable to counteract the activities of the Dutch. The agents received a licence from the Turkish Pasha to land their goods, under specially favourable circumstances. The trade results were not, however, encouraging, and it became evident that, to be successful, it would be necessary to fix a permanent factory at that port. Such a factory was provisionally established in 1643.

The Dutch were now determined to make their position in Persia predominant, by any means whatsoever. Hitherto they had obtained only their share in the trade of Persia by making presents and by intrigue; but in 1645–6 they resorted to what the English agents had often recommended to their own Company, viz. the employment of force,[1] to compel the Persians to give

[1] 'It had been a subject of much discussion, between the Court of the East India Company at home and the Presidency of Surat, for several years, whether the English trade with Persia could be most effectually revived, by the employment of force, or by treaty. On this vexed question, Mr. Aungier, the Company's able administrator at Surat, reported in 1675, that the propriety of hostilities rested on the kind of warfare which was practicable, and on the warfare being in the name of the King, and not in that of the Company; that hostilities could consist only in the blockade of the Persian ports, particularly Bandar Abbas, the Company not

them an almost exclusive right to the trade in the country. Besides bringing a large fleet into the Gulf, the Dutch, in the autumn of 1645, sent a military force, with which they made an attack on the castle of Qishm. This so alarmed the Shah that he solicited an armistice from Commodore Block, the Dutch commander, and offered to make peace by granting the Dutch the most favourable terms of trade. Commodore Block was permitted to proceed to Isfahan, and was received by the Shah; terms of peace were adjusted, and hostilities ceased between the Persians and Dutch, who obtained a licence to purchase silk in any part of Persia they might please, and to export it free of customs. 'This change not only depressed English trade in Persia, but affected that which they had been forming, between the Coromandel Coast and that country, of which the Dutch now got possession.' [1]

The affairs of the East India Company's factory at Bandar Abbas, during these events, fell into a most precarious state, though the agents still kept up their claim to the proportion of customs.[2] To avoid the consequences of the hostilities between the Dutch and Persians, the agents found it necessary to embark the Company's property at Bandar Abbas and send it to Basra, as a place of greater security, where it arrived in safety in June 1645.

Encouraged by the success of their policy against the Persians at Qishm, the Dutch followed up their superiority so effectually that they immediately directed eight of their ships to proceed up the Gulf to Basra, where they almost ruined the English factory. In 1649 the influence of the Dutch in the Gulf was still in the ascendant, and there appeared a prospect of their obtaining further privileges from the Persian Government, who now held them in awe, though not in respect. In 1650 Dutch preponderance was intensified by the expulsion of the Portuguese from Muscat; the Dutch fleet which arrived at Bandar Abbas in this year consisted of eleven vessels, and the stocks of goods landed were large. Some idea of the amount of the trade carried on there

being provided with any military force to make an impression on shore; that even this limited warfare must be proceeded in with caution, to avoid giving offence to the Mughal and to his subjects, or advantage being taken of it by the Portuguese, who were uniformly obstructing the English trade, or by the Dutch, who would prosecute the trade to Bandar Abbas and endeavour to engross it.' Bruce.

[1] Bruce, vol. i, pp. 413 f.

[2] They indeed succeeded in maintaining a footing at Bandar Abbas and realizing their moiety of the customs.

by them is given by Tavernier, who was at Bandar Abbas in 1652: 'The Dutch', he says, 'vended fifteen or sixteen hundred thousand pounds of their Pepper, and paid therewith for all their silk.' In the next two years, cargoes of an estimated value of £100,000 and £120,000 were brought ashore, thus almost swamping English commerce; but a demand which the Dutch now made, for equality of treatment with the English, was still rejected by Shah Abbas II, who had succeeded Shah Safi at his death in 1641. English trade, though at a very low ebb, was not entirely extinguished.

In 1652 war broke out between the English and the Dutch in Europe. For some time previously, tension between England and Holland had been increasing, in consequence of the commercial rivalry between the two nations and of aggressions committed by the Dutch in the East against the East India Company. In 1651 a Navigation Act, the object of which was to destroy the Dutch carrying trade, was passed in England, and in 1652 Cromwell declared war against Holland. The struggle lasted two years, operations being conducted in Europe by Van Tromp and Ruyter on the one side and by Blake and Monk on the other; but no very clear superiority was gained by either belligerent. A Dutch fleet appeared off Surat soon after the declaration of war and sailed for the Persian Gulf. Here the Dutch proposed a combination between themselves and the Portuguese for the purpose of destroying English trade; but the Portuguese declined to co-operate and, unaided, the Dutch captured two English ships off Jask and made a prize of a third. The next year (1654), in an action fought off Bandar Abbas, five Dutch ships sank the *Endeavour* and captured the *Falcon*, and made about thirty prisoners in circumstances by no means creditable to the English, who thereby lost command of these waters for the time being. So completely was the Gulf in the hands of the Dutch that for some time trade at Bandar Abbas was at a standstill, and the Company's agents at Basra thought it prudent to remove their factory to a place of greater safety. Peace, however, brought this critical state of affairs to an end in 1654; and damages to the amount of £85,000 were awarded to the English East India Company.

A second war between the English and Dutch followed in 1665–7, but the effect of the two contests on affairs in the Persian Gulf were neither very marked nor permanent. Certainly the English were no better off: their trade at Bandar Abbas

continued to languish until about 1683, while the Dutch easily maintained their predominance. The situation was aggravated by the formation, in 1664, of a French East India Company, whereby a third European competitor in the Eastern trade entered the field. The relative status of the contending parties during the last quarter of the seventeenth century may be gathered from various contemporary travellers. Writing in 1663, Thevenot says:

'The English and Dutch have each of them their Houses very well built by the Sea-side, with the Flag of their several Nations upon a high Pole on their Terrasses. The Dutch are absolute Masters at Bender. They have so great Credit there, that some days before, the Scheich Bender having displeased the Dutch Commander, this Commander caused the Dutch Flag to be torn down, and made the Scheich humbly beseech him, nay and give him presents too, to put up another.

'I stayed but a week at Bender Abassi, and then was obliged to turn back again, there being no probability that I could embark there for the Indies, seeing I must have run too great a danger if I stayed longer for a favourable occasion. There were but six vessels there, which were bound for the Indies, four Dutch ships, one Armenian, and a Moor: as for the Dutch there was no thinking to go with them, for they have taken an Oath to Transport no Franck thither, and that by express Command from the Company; because (they say) the Francks discoursing with the Sea-men, inform themselves commonly of what concerns the Trade, and they are willing that that should be a hidden mystery, unknown to any but themselves.'[1]

The increasing hold of the Dutch upon the Persian trade is also witnessed by Dr. Fryer, who, writing of Bandar Abbas, about 1677, says:

'This Port receives most ships going or coming from Busserah, as they find the Markets answer their designs: But the greatest Traffick, next Indian Cloth, comes from the Spice Trade; which the Dutch engross, beside Sugar and Copper formerly; for which they carry off Fifty thousand *Thomands* worth of Velvets, Silk, Raw and Wrought, with Rich Carpets, besides many Tunn of Gold and Silver, Yearly; so Great and Absolute is their trade from the Muluccoes, and South Sea, hither, that they are reported to have brought Six Ships laden with Spice, which the cunning Merchants thought to make advantage of; but the Hollanders, being Crafts-Masters, sent for the Cargo on shoar of Two Ships, and piled it up before the Factory Gate, where they not coming to their Price, immediately, set Fire thereto, and consumed it all; which the Buyers neglecting, or laughing at, they caused other Two to be served in the same manner, knowing so great a quantity had caused a Glut, when they asked the same rate for the

[1] Thevenot, J. de (2), Pt. ii, pp. 137 f.

XII. GOMBRUN, BANDAR ABBAS, *c.* 1670

remaining Two; as the old Sybils did Tarquin for their Oracular Writings left unburnt; whereby the Persians were Taught, that their Extravagance was not Madness, but Policy, they being obliged to Bid Higher for fewer Commodities; the Hollanders being well assured none could furnish them with others than was brought by them.' [1]

With this, contrast the same writer's account of the English position at Bandar Abbas:

'The English Company's Trade is but small here, only carrying off some few Drugs, Carmania Wool, Goats, Dates and Horses; though they make it worth their while to keep their Agent in good Port, (*sic*) as well from the Allowance from the *Shawbunder* as by Consulage of 2£. and ½ per Cent, for all Foreign Goods, that seek their Protection.'

According to Fryer, the French appear, too, to have made but little headway since the establishment of their East India Company in 1664, for:

'The French have as little to do at this Port as in other Places; and were it not for the Credit of their Interpreter, who gets good profit by Wine (he being privileged with a Wine-press for that Nation at Siras, as well as the other Europe Nations), they could not subsist; but Monsieur makes an outside, lives retiredly, and without more Business than to visit and be visited (which Courtesy passes interchangeably among the Christians as well as Natives) lounges his time away.'

Chardin also, who was at Bandar Abbas in 1674, says:

'It is a strange thing how prejudiced Orientals are in favour of the Dutch. The Persians and Indians, basing their reasoning on the matter of their commerce, which they see ever flourishing, while that of other nations only crawls along, so to speak, believe them to be the Kings of Europe. Thus remarked the Governor of Bandar to the Chief of the French Company: "You say that your king has captured the Country of the Dutch; nevertheless, here come seven of their ships, whereas to you and to the English not one arrives."' [2]

Enough has been quoted to show that the position of the Dutch in the Gulf, towards the end of the seventeenth century, was overwhelmingly superior to that of their English competitors. We turn again for a moment to events in Europe. The ambition of Louis XIV of France brought him into collision with both Holland and Spain, and war was declared. In 1676 the combined Dutch and Spanish fleets were destroyed by the French in the Mediterranean. At first, England made common cause with France, and in 1676 an indecisive engagement between English

[1] Fryer, J. (2).

[2] Chardin (3).

and Dutch vessels took place at Solebay; but public opinion in England was hostile to France, compelling a peace with Holland in 1674, and towards the end of the struggle, England was ranged with other European powers on the side of Holland. In 1678, the independence of the Dutch was secured by the Peace of Nimeguen; and the year 1688 found England and Holland in alliance in Europe, to oppose the predominance of France. From that time, Dutch interests began to be subordinated to those of England and remained so until 1697, when, France being exhausted, and the question of the Spanish succession having begun to absorb the attention of Louis XIV, hostilities were brought to an end by the Peace of Ryswick.

The Dutch now began to lose credit in Persia, largely owing to the arrogant methods they adopted in their commercial transactions, and the end of the seventeenth century marks the turn of the tide in favour of the English.

The reasons for the success of the Dutch policy in the East Indies and the Persian Gulf for so long a period, are ably summarized by Bruce:[1] 'The commercial enterprises and conquests of the Dutch, in the East Indies, arose from the defenceless situation of the Portuguese and English establishments; from the Dutch East India Company being supported by large funds and fleets, and assimilated with the States-General (many of their Directors being also members of the States); and from the varying policies of the English Government, which successively infringed on the exclusive privileges of the London East India Company;—events which abridged their equipments, and prevented them from extending their commerce at the few factories which they could preserve, or from defraying the heavy charges of those factories, and the repeated losses, in stores and shipping, to which they were exposed.'

Commenting on the same question, another writer says: 'The Dutch supremacy in the East formed the widest expression of their hard earned freedom at home. . . . The question of questions is not the size of a European nation, but what sacrifices it is willing to make for its position in the East. . . . In the first quarter of the seventeenth century, the strength of England was not less than that of Holland. But the English nation was as yet prepared to risk little for the Indian trade; the English sovereigns would risk nothing; the Dutch people and the Dutch Government were ready to risk much. Holland brought to the

[1] Bruce, i.

struggle a slowly acquired knowledge of the Eastern trade, a vast patriotic subscription from the United Provinces, and a resolve alike of her people and her Government that the Spice Islands should pass to no hands but their own. England cared to risk only a small capital, split up into separate voyages and joint-stocks: for State support she had but the quicksand diplomacy of the first James and Charles. The United Dutch Company was practically a national enterprise; the London Company was a private undertaking; and the fortitude of individual Englishmen in Asia availed little against the combined strength of Holland. The forces were too unequally matched.' [1]

Evolution of Policy of the East India Company. For several decades after its establishment in 1600, the character of the English East India Company was in the main commercial, but in the last half of the seventeenth century there were evidences of a change of policy. Partly driven by events and partly guided by experience, the Company began slowly and almost imperceptibly to assume that political status and position which were, in the end, to overshadow their mercantile origin.

For a time, between 1654 and 1657, the activities of the Company were prejudicially affected by a rival body known as 'The Merchant Adventurers', who claimed the liberty to trade separately on private capital. But when a Council of State decided that private enterprise by individuals must be discontinued, the result was the accession of a majority of the Merchant Adventurers to the East India Company, which was thereby considerably strengthened.

About 1665 it was proposed by the Company's agents at Surat that application should be made for permission from the Crown to establish a factory at Bombay, the possession of which the Portuguese, by force of adverse circumstances, had relinquished. Action eventually went far beyond this suggestion, for in 1688 Bombay Island was made over by the Crown to the Company on payment of a small annual rent; and the Company was invested with authority to maintain troops and a civil administration—already, in 1687, the head-quarters of the Company in India had been removed from Surat to Bombay.

A year or so after, a change of heart in the proceedings of the Company is indicated. The Court of the Company in London, in sending instructions to their President at Bombay, fore-

[1] Hunter, W. W., vol. i.

shadowed the changing of their purely commercial policy in India to its ultimate basis of territorial sovereignty, and made use of these notable words :

' The increase of our revenue is the subject of our care, as much as our trade: 'tis that must maintain our force when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade; 'tis that *must make us a nation in India*; without that, we are but as a great number of Interlopers, united by His Majesty's Royal Charter, fit only to trade where no body of power thinks it their interest to prevent us.'

The period, from about 1664 to the end of the century, was marked by disturbances on the part of the Mahrattas, which caused insecurity around the Company's settlements in India and had a bad effect upon trade ; and there was also serious friction from time to time between the English and Mughals. These conditions naturally had their harmful effect upon the commercial activities in Persia.

There had been much jealousy, in various quarters, of the exclusive rights granted to the East India Company to trade with the East, and in 1698 a body of private Merchants secured an Act of Parliament under which they were incorporated as ' The General Society trading to the East Indies ', by which the rights of the original Company—after this, generally described as ' The London Company '—were abrogated, such abrogation to take effect from 29th September 1701. Shortly after, a second group, known as ' The English Company trading to the East Indies ', came into existence and rivalry with the London Company. A lamentable conflict between these companies began, which might have resulted in the loss by the English of their position in the East. As it was, trade suffered deplorably, and the effect was felt even in the Persian Gulf.

It was soon realized in England that the continuance of the struggle would result in the financial and political bankruptcy of all. After much negotiation the union of the new and old companies was effected in 1708, and the company formed by the fusion received the name of ' The United Company of the Merchants of England trading to the East Indies '. This event marked a real turning-point in Indian affairs, and the effect was soon reflected in the Persian Gulf. Thenceforward, the English Company assumed a more public and national character. They procured the deputation of an ambassador from the King of England to the Mughal Emperor, and their Presidents were invested with consular power and rank.

XII

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. THE GROWTH OF BRITISH INFLUENCE

'Out of the five states which competed for the New World success has fallen to that one . . . which was least hampered by the Old World.'

SEELEY, *The Expansion of England.*

BEFORE proceeding to describe events, in the Persian Gulf itself, during the eighteenth century, it is convenient to summarize in the briefest way the history, during that period, of the important surrounding territories, viz. Persia, Oman, and Turkish Iraq. In Persia, the eighteenth century was one of constant change and unrest—it was, in fact, a century of revolutions, which are fully described in a number of works,[1] and only the principal events need be stated here.

At the opening of the century Shah Husain was upon the throne, and the first twenty years of his rule, says Malcolm, 'passed in that deep lull which often precedes a storm', which in fact broke in 1720, when the Afghans under Mahmud invaded Persia. Defeated at first by the Persians under Lutf Ali Khan, at Kirman, the Afghans were ultimately victorious; Shah Husain abdicated, the Safavi dynasty came to an end, and the Afghans became rulers in Persia, occupying Isfahan and eventually Shiraz.

Persia remained under Afghan rule—first under Mahmud and then his cousin Ashraf—until 1730. During this period of internal trouble the country was invaded by the Russians under Peter the Great;[2] moreover, in 1725, the Turks harried and

[1] Notably Malcolm (1) (3); Sykes (6).

[2] Peter the Great had resolved to take advantage of the confusion in Persia to extend the commerce of his kingdom, by making himself master of the western shores of the Caspian. He commanded the army in person, sailed down the Volga with thirty-three thousand infantry, and, after a prosperous voyage across the Caspian, landed on the coast of Daghistan.

That Peter had far-reaching designs on Persia is indicated by the tenor of his Will, which, as Sykes says, is 'uniformly aggressive, Russia being urged to aim at almost universal dominion'.

Clause IX of this remarkable document (which might well have been written by a Soviet Commissar two centuries later) enjoins those concerned: 'To approach as near as possible to Constantinople and India. Whoever governs there will be the true sovereign of the world. Consequently excite continual wars, not only in Turkey, but in Persia. Establish dockyards on the Black Sea, seize upon little pieces near this sea as well as on the Baltic, which is doubly necessary for the attainment of our

conquered several of the north-western provinces. A treaty for the partition of some of the finest Persian provinces was concluded between Russia and Turkey, but it was never actually carried into execution; and in 1726 the Afghan ruler, Ashraf, defeated the Turks, with whom he concluded peace.

The year 1726 is marked by the rise to power of Tahmasp Quli, Khan of Khurasan, better known as Nadir Shah, who joined forces with Tahmasp Shah[1] against the Afghans. The latter were completely routed, and those who escaped death were driven from Persia in 1730, whereupon Tahmasp grasped the power. This in a short time Nadir usurped, and in 1736 declared himself Shah. He made Meshed his capital and his reign lasted until his assassination in 1747. Nadir was succeeded by Adil Shah, dethroned in 1748 by his brother Ibrahim Khan. Next follows the short rule of Shah Rukh, after whom Kerim Khan Zand, chief of a small nomad tribe of western Persia, rose to power. Styling himself *Vakil*, he by degrees established his rule over the greater part of Persia. He brought Fars into subjection in 1756, made Shiraz his capital, and during a large part of his reign the country enjoyed a state of comparative tranquillity.

In 1775 Kerim sent an army under Sadiq Khan, his brother, against the Turks and laid siege to Basra, which surrendered in 1776 and remained under Persian rule until the death of Kerim in 1779. 'With Kerim Khan perished the fortunes of his house and, for several years, the felicity of Persia',[2] for, thereafter, almost to the end of the century, it was torn by internal dissensions. A succession of short reigns followed, notably that of Lutf Ali Khan, with the death of whom, in 1798, ended the Zand dynasty. Then arose the dynasty of the Qajars in the person of Agha Muhammad Khan, who, crowned in 1796, and murdered the following year in his tent, was succeeded by Fath Ali Shah.

About the year 1717, during the reign of the weak Shah Husain, Sultan bin Saif of Oman wrested Bahrain from the Persians, and

project. And in the decadence of Persia, penetrate as far as the Persian Gulf, re-establish if it be possible the ancient commerce with the Levant, advance as far as India, which is the depot of the world. Arrived at this point we shall have no longer need of England's gold.'

Clause XIII runs: 'Sweden being dismembered, Persia subjugated, Poland crushed, . . . we must then propose separately, and very secretly, first to the Court of Versailles, then to that of Vienna, to share with them the empire of the universe. If one of the two accept,' &c. Sykes (6), pp. 245 f.

[1] Son of the deposed Shah Husain, who, during the Afghan domination, held his court at Farahabad in Mazanderan.

[2] Brydges (1).

in 1720 the Muscat Arabs seized certain islands off the Persian coast, including Qishm; but in the reign of Nadir Shah the tables were turned, and a Persian force, dispatched from Bandar Abbas in 1737, overran Oman, which was then occupied by the Persians until 1744. Bahrain remained under Persian domination from about 1753 until 1783, when it was lost to the Utub Arabs. At about this time the Wahabis became aggressive and attacked Baghdad, Kuwait, and Hasa in turn; Wahabi power, as we shall see in the succeeding chapter, had developed to a very serious extent by 1798, and in 1800 they captured Hasa and Qatif.

The year 1793 was marked by internal dissensions in Oman: the Sultanate of Oman, with the town of Muscat as its nucleus, now became a separate entity and, as such, entered prominently into Persian Gulf politics. Sayyid Sultan, its ruler, of whom a great deal will be said hereafter, took possession of Bandar Abbas and added Gwadar and Chahbar on the Makran coast to the dependencies of his realm. In 1797 French influence began to be felt at Muscat.

Having made this general survey, we turn to events in the Gulf itself. The close of the last chapter showed Dutch influence in the Gulf to be distinctly on the wane. In 1699 Shah Husain manifested his preference for the English by paying a State visit to their factory at Isfahan, attended by the ladies of his harem. Sumptuous preparations were made for his reception, the expenses of which amounted to more than £12,000; but the results were advantageous and commensurate, for not only did the Shah manifest his gratification by presenting a robe of honour, a valuable sword, and a horse to the agent, but one year's arrears of customs were paid at Bandar Abbas, and other solid advantages followed.[1] Though the Dutch begged the honour of a royal visit to their factory also, they did not obtain it, and they lost further ground in the struggle for predominance. When they sought permission to erect a fort at Bandar Abbas for the protection of their interests there, this was refused.

[1] Hamilton, however, tells us quaintly that 'Mr. Bruce, the Company's Agent, magnifies the honours done to his Masters, above what the Dutch could ever obtain. He relates how he and all the factory, great and small, were ordered to leave their house, and chamber doors and warehouses all open, for his Majesty and his Seraglio companions to ramble thro', and take such things as best pleased him and his minions; and there was a table left in the Dining Room, spread and furnished with the richest sweetmeats and fruits. I believe the Company was not very ambitious of having such honours conferred on them, since they were obliged to pay for them.'

The English even lost credit temporarily, owing to their seeming helplessness regarding piracy, of which, about 1705–7, there was a serious recrudescence ; whilst the Dutch, eager to regain favour with the Shah, professed themselves anxious to cope with this increasing menace. In 1704–5 the Court of the Old East India Company announced its intention of equipping armed ships, as soon as the war with France should be over, to clear the seas and ' to root out that nest of pirates the Muscat Arabs ' : but the war continued and nothing was done. This condition of affairs, too, was undoubtedly aggravated by the conflicting interests of the various trading companies, until a happier state arose after their fusion in 1708 (see p. 170), when the prestige of the English again increased.

About the year 1718 the Arabs of Muscat were unusually active ; they made a successful descent on Bahrain, but the inhabitants virtually deserted the island, by this means bringing the Omani occupation to an end. A year or two later, taking advantage of the Afghan invasion which had begun, the Omanis seized certain islands off the Persian coast, including Qishm. A Persian army under Lutf Ali Khan was sent into the neighbourhood of Bandar Abbas to dislodge them, but had to turn northwards to meet the Afghan danger, without having affected anything, and the Omanis remained, for the time being, masters of the situation on the Persian littoral.

In 1721 trouble arose for the British at Bandar Abbas. The town was attacked by a force of four thousand Baluchi horse, when the Baluchis overran the province of Kirman and took the town of Lar. Hamilton describes in his breezy manner the very gallant defence of the British factory by a handful of British seamen and the Company's servants (only about fifty strong) :

' We heard ', he says, ' of the design about ten days before they came, and so we and the Dutch fortified our Factories as well as possibly we could, planting little falconets on the top of our walls on swivels, and beating out ports in our walls to ply great guns, to scour the avenues to our factories. Meanwhile the Persian Governor fired guns every night, to let the enemy know he was a brave fellow : however they had a mind to see, and on the 15th. of December, they appeared near the town, on a swift march towards it, which scared the Governor so much, that tho' there was an high mud wall between him and them, he got on horseback, and fled to a fort on the sea-shore, leaving a few guns, loaded as they were, to the enemy.

' The Ballowches first came to the West quarter of the town, where our factory stands, and soon made passages through the mud walls. They hewed

down all that came in their way, particularly old people and children, and came in a confused haste to attack our factory, down some lanes; but we gave them a warm welcome with our great guns and small shot. They soon found their mistake and retired in as great haste as they came. . . . They had a consultation next day after their repulse, how they might make another attack; but none would undertake to lead their men on, and so the day after consultation, they went to attack the Dutch who were three times stronger than we, and they met with the same kind reception we gave them; but they had a warehouse within pistol-shot of their factory, with goods to the value of 20,000 pounds sterling in it, which the Ballowches broke into and plundered. The Dutch lost twelve men and had eight or ten wounded. . . . They continued in our neighbourhood, with their plunder, about a month, I suppose, till they received new orders how to dispose of themselves.'

During the Afghan occupation of Persia (1722–9) affairs in the neighbourhood of Bandar Abbas were again very unsettled. The Qasimi shaikh of Ras al Khaima obtained possession of Basidu, on Qishm Island, and created a situation detrimental to the trade of Bandar Abbas, until proceeded against, in 1727, by a small squadron composed of the frigate *Britannia* and some smaller vessels. In 1728, the Afghans having again overrun Fars and taken Shiraz, their commander, Zabardast Khan, detached a corps to attack Bandar Abbas. The Persians fled at its approach, but the Europeans showed ' so resolute a countenance ' that the Afghan commander feared to attack them. The expedition ended in his accepting a small supply of provisions, and the Afghans retired greatly reduced in numbers by the unhealthiness of the climate.[1] At this juncture, it would appear that the Dutch temporarily seized Hormuz, but were persuaded by the English agent to give it up.

Persian Gulf affairs after these incidents occupy no prominent place for some years. The Afghans had been expelled from Persia by Nadir Shah, who, by 1736, having also eventually defeated the Turks, had become complete master of the country, including the whole coast from Basra to Makran. Nadir's attitude towards the English Company was at first by no means friendly, partly because of their unwillingness to supply him with ships in the prosecution of his campaigns,and partly because of dispositions alleged to have been made by the English for helping the Turks to defend Basra against the Persians.[2] But after his accession to

[1] Malcolm (1) and Krusinski.

[2] Under pretext of a desire to assist the ruling Imam, Saif bin Sultan II, to suppress rebellions among his subjects, Nadir also sent an expedition consisting of

the throne, Nadir's attitude towards the English appears to have become more complaisant, though no definite privileges were accorded to them during his reign, except a renewal of all the former privileges of the English in Persia, including the right of receiving 1,000 tumans a year from the customs of Bandar Abbas.[1] For the latter, he eventually substituted a right to one-third of the customs on goods imported there in English ships, and made a promise that English merchants should be civilly and justly treated.

Nadir Shah had one project by which he was at times almost obsessed: he was anxious to make Persia a naval power both in the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, thereby rendering those inland seas *mare clausum* to Persia, as the Black Sea then was to Turkey. Lord Curzon admirably describes the steps Nadir took to this end, and to his work [2] the reader is referred. The headquarters of the incipient Gulf Fleet was at Bushire; [3] but Nadir's great design of building an entire fleet, with timber conveyed by forced labour across Persia from the Caspian shores, remained unrealized.

In 1747 the reign of Nadir abruptly came to an end by his assassination, and the affairs of Persia fell into chaos, which prevailed until Kerim Khan Zand had more or less consolidated his power and become *Vakil* of the greater part of Persia, establishing his capital at Shiraz in place of Meshed. During this time, in 1750, the English factory at Isfahan was closed down and never reopened—and the question of removing the agency from Bandar Abbas, owing to the repeated disturbances and dangers, became urgent. Surgeon Ives, who visited Bandar Abbas in 1758, says:

'At present it is a place of no kind of importance, except what it receives from the English and Dutch factories. The two factory houses are the only

about 5,000 men and 1,500 horses to Oman. His real object was to annex the territory. The Dutch, under pressure from the Persians, assisted the expedition with a ship, while the English held aloof. In the course of 1737–8 the Persians overran the whole of Oman, captured Muscat, and besieged Sohar; they held the country until their expulsion by the Omanis in 1744.

[1] Saldanha, pp. 48 and 50. [2] Curzon (4), pp. 390 ff. See also Hanway.

[3] Niebuhr (1), who visited Bushire in 1761, says: 'Vessels drawing twelve feet of water can come up to the houses of the town at high tide; it was for this reason that Nadir Shah had his big vessels built there, and assembled all the fleet in its port, thus making the town a little more flourishing and raising it out of the obscurity in which it languished previously. Some remains of the fleet may still be seen.'

Sir Harford Jones Brydges (1) records: 'When I landed at Bushire in 1784 the remains of three of these vessels (of Nadir's Navy) were then lying off the town; and the most perfect of them appeared to be about 500 tons burthen.'

buildings remaining of any importance; the whole city besides is almost one entire scene of ruins, which served only to convince us of its once flourishing state; but the constant wars carried on in this country, and their attendants, confusion and anarchy, have deprived the English of almost all their commercial advantages. So different an appearance hath this city now from what it had when Sir John Chardin visited it!'

Conditions generally, for the English, had been rendered still more precarious in the Persian Gulf by the outbreak of the Seven Years War in Europe in 1756, the effects of which soon began to be felt in the East. On the 15th October 1759 a French squadron of four ships under Dutch colours—one of which, the *Condé*, carried sixty-four guns—under the command of Count d'Estaing, appeared before Bandar Abbas. The ships bombarded the English factory, which was gallantly defended by sixteen of the Company's seamen and some Sepoys, under Mr. Douglas, the chief agent. The French burnt the sloop *Speedwell* and at high water hauled in their twenty-two-gun ship within four hundred yards of the factory; they landed troops and heavy guns, battered the building, and the defenders were forced to surrender. They were regarded as prisoners of war, with liberty to carry away their personal effects. By one of the eight articles of the capitulation, it was agreed that the twenty-six civilians found in the place should be exchanged for Count d'Estaing, who, being on *parole*, was ostensibly proceeding to Europe by way of Basra, though, in reality, he conducted the operations. Having burnt the factory, the French set sail on the 30th October, deriving more profit than honour from this feat of arms.[1]

The time for the English to abandon Bandar Abbas as their principal port in the Gulf was now clearly overdue,[2] and the agents of the Company at once sought a new site for their operations. They had at first the idea of forming a settlement on Hormuz. After a thorough examination of the various Persian ports, Agent Douglas, in 1762, reported in favour of Bushire, 'which at that time was full of inland merchants who seemed to have entire

[1] Low.

[2] A dispatch from the agent of Bandar Abbas to the president at Bombay shows how, nothing daunted by their misfortunes, they were prepared to carry on in adversity. It runs: 'So soon as the French have gone we shall endeavour to get down this year's investment of wool and endeavour to procure money . . . to pay for the same; and should any Guard Ship have left Bombay with woolen goods for this place e'er this reaches your Honour, we shall take those ashore for market and afterwards send the vessel to Bussorah. At present we reside at the Dutch factory.'

liberty to buy, sell or export their goods when they thought proper . . . the present Governour bearing an excellent character and seemingly desirous of our settling there; . . . and a Person there need have no connections, or caress any one but the Shaikh himself. That, as three parts of the town was surrounded by water and that towards the land with a wall and mounted with good cannon, the expenses could not be great.'[1] So, in March 1763, the Company evacuated the factory at Bandar Abbas, sent all their stock to Basra under convoy of the *Drake*, and their treasure to Bombay, not, however, without serious resistance and opposition on the part of the Persian governor of Basra, who suspected some sinister design on the part of the English. The Dutch had previously removed their factory from Bandar Abbas to Basra in 1759, and we shall trace their activities in a subsequent section.

Basra, then, temporarily became the principal British establishment in the Gulf, absorbing a Residency which had formerly been subordinate to Bandar Abbas; and, in 1764, Basra was expressly recognized by the Porte as a Consulate under the Capitulations. This transference of the British Agency from Persian to Turkish soil was an incident of decided political importance.

In 1763 a definite agreement was entered into with Shaikh Sadun of Bushire[2] for the establishment of a factory and for exclusive trade at that port, and in the same year the agreement was confirmed by Royal Grant from the Persian ruler, Kerim Khan. This event was one of considerable importance in Persian Gulf history. The farman under which the Bushire factory was established, conceded to the English a peculiar and privileged position, the result of the growth of their influence as a trading power in India and of the success with which they had overcome the hostility of their old rivals, the Portuguese and the Dutch. Kerim Khan's farman was granted to Mr. Price, as 'Governor-General for the English nation in the Gulf of Persia', in response to a request for a 'grant of their ancient privileges in these kingdoms'. It was expressly made, out of the Vakil's great friendship for the English nation, and it conceded not only an unbounded, but a virtually exclusive liberty of trade to the English. No customs were to be collected on goods imported or exported by them. A monopoly in the trade in woollen goods was conferred upon the English, and it stipulated that 'if any person whatever attempted to bring in such goods clandestinely it should be lawful to the English to seize them', and 'no European nation

[1] Saldanha, *Selections from State Papers*, No. CXV.

[2] Aitchison (1), i.

whatever is to be permitted to settle at Bushire so long as the English continue a factory there '.[1]

It may be doubted if this departure from the principle of freedom of trade which we had long advocated and pressed on the Persians was fully carried into practice. But the farman unmistakably indicated the privileged nature of the position which it was intended to confer upon English trade and traders. A site for the factory—built at the expense of the shaikh of Bushire—as well as a garden and burial ground, was granted ;[2] the servants of the English were to be exempted from the local jurisdiction, and they were to hoist their own colours, as they had been allowed to do at Bandar Abbas, and to have twenty-one guns for saluting. It must not be forgotten that these concessions were granted during the reign of a weak ruler, and in a time of more than usual misgovernment and unsettlement; but considered in connexion with a new farman, granted 1788 by Kerim Khan's nephew, who expressed his desire that the English merchants should ' sleep in the cradle of security and confidence ', it shows that, towards the end of the eighteenth century, England had attained a position in the Gulf to which none of her competitors could then lay claim ;[3] not even the Dutch, whose influence by this time was decidedly on the wane.

At this important juncture we turn back for a moment to notice the contemporary activities of the Dutch.

The Dutch at Kharag Island. For a long time prior to their removal from Bandar Abbas in 1759, the Dutch had a factory at Basra, at which they carried on a lucrative trade in woollens through Aleppo ; and, in 1747, they re-established a settlement at Bushire which they had closed, and from which they again withdrew finally in 1752. Even before their abandonment of Bandar Abbas, owing to the disturbed state of affairs there, Basra had become the principal centre of their commercial interests in the Gulf. In 1753 their policy suddenly took a new departure by the action of Baron Kniphausen, at that date the head of Dutch affairs at Basra, whose activities brought the almost uninhabited and barren island of Kharag, situated some thirty miles north-west of Bushire, into temporary prominence.

Complaints of Kniphausen's methods at Basra were made to the

[1] Aitchison (1), i.

[2] The present Consulate-General in Bushire is built on this old site of the original factory.

[3] Bennett, T. J.

higher Dutch authorities at Batavia and he was virtually expelled from the town. He thereupon visited Kharag [1] and, having surveyed the island and found it suitable for a commercial settlement, induced Mir Nasir, chief of Bandar Rig and lord of the island, to cede it to the Dutch East India Company. Armed with a letter to this effect, he proceeded in 1752 to Batavia, vindicated himself of the charges made against him, and succeeded in persuading the Dutch authorities that the opportunity of occupying Kharag was one that ought not to be lost.

Accordingly, Ives tells us, 'he sailed from Batavia with two ships and fifty men, and took possession of Karec, the whole of whose inhabitants at that time consisted only of about one hundred poor fishermen.[2] As he had brought but few materials with him, and as the Government of Batavia was very slow in sending him the succour they had promised, he was at first driven to great straits in endeavouring to establish his new colony. At last he hit upon the expedient of sending for workmen from Persia and Arabia, and with their assistance built a little compact fort, sufficiently strong against any of the country powers, and capable of defending itself against any ships in India, except those belonging to our East India Company.'

Not long after his settlement on Kharag, a quarrel arose between Kniphausen and Mir Muhanna,[3] then chief of Bandar Rig, over

[1] For a detailed description of the island, consult Ives and Niebuhr (1).

[2] Parsons, 1808, says the island was uninhabited prior to the coming of the Dutch, but this is clearly incorrect and in any case most unlikely.

[3] A predatory chief of the coastal district north of Bushire, whose head-quarters were at Bandar Rig. Throughout his struggle for power, Kerim Khan Vakil had been partially supported by the Arab tribes, who inhabit the Persian shore of the Gulf. But of the petty chiefs who refused him allegiance, the most refractory and troublesome was this Mir Muhanna of Bandar Rig, a man at once remarkable for his valour and his atrocious wickedness. He had offended the Persian Government by interrupting, by his depredations, the communications between Shiraz, Kerim's capital, and Bushire, then the principal port. When attacked by a numerous army, he defended his possessions for several months; being forced to abandon them, he took refuge in the island of Khargu, north of Kharag and opposite Bandar Rig, a spot of not more than two square miles of area, and with hardly any cultivation. Here he not only supported a number of followers and defeated all the efforts of the shaikh of Bushire to subdue him, but added to his means by acts of piracy and the plunder of a number of vessels, including some British; and even in surprising the Dutch at Kharag and capturing two of their vessels, which lay immediately under the guns of the fort. These successes, by giving more scope to his dreadful cruelties, only accelerated his ruin. All around him were enemies; a rebellion of his own followers in 1769 obliged him to fly to Basra where he was seized and slain, and his corpse cast out to be devoured by dogs. Malcolm (3).

the question whether or not rent was payable by the Dutch for their occupation of the island; hostilities followed, and continued for some years. Kniphausen eventually returned to Batavia and was succeeded in the administration [1] of the island by one Van der Hulst, formerly his assistant at Basra, who by tact and good management succeeded in establishing more satisfactory relations with Mir Muhanna.

The story of the commercial hold of the Dutch in the Persian Gulf is, however, now drawing to a close. By 1753, or thereabouts, they had entirely withdrawn from Basra; they withdrew from Bushire soon after, and from Bandar Abbas in 1759. The only station remaining to them was their fortified settlement on Kharag, and their tenure of this was brief, for in 1765 they again became involved in hostilities with Muhanna. At the beginning of the following year the fort was captured by that desperate character. 'Mir Muhanna', Parsons tells us, 'took possession of the Castle, and stripping the Dutch of all they had, suffered them to depart for Batavia with the Dutch ship, scarce allowing them a sufficient quantity of provisions for the voyage, having previously disarmed her of all her guns, powder and shot; so that besides acquiring the island, he got an immense booty in goods and money belonging to the Dutch East India Company, or the private property of their servants.' [2]

In view of the unprofitableness of the Kharag settlement and the dangers to which it was open, no attempt was made by the government of the Dutch East Indies to re-establish it and, with

[1] An interesting description of the typically Teutonic methods of Kniphausen's administration is given by Mr. Wood, in a letter to the agent at Bandar Abbas, May 1756, as follows: 'A Hundred Europeans is the established number of Soldiers allowed from Batavia for the defence of Karrack fort; . . . and they are all neat, handsome fellows, kept under the strickest discipline, besides these Mynheer Kniphausen has above a hundred Coffree Slaves, well armed according to the Country manner with swords and Targets, who, from his manner of treating them, are likely to remain faithful and contented under their Bondage, he takes care to supply them with plenty of dates, Fish and Bread, gives them decent Cloathing, . . . and never Controls, or even advises them in regard to Religion, but when they commit a fault, he punishes them very severely, and whenever he has occasion to drab * any of the Arabs or Country people he orders two or three of the Slaves to take him in hand, which service seems to be peculiarly adopted to their Capacity and in my life I never saw people acquit themselves in a duty of this kind with greater dexterity and judgment.' *Selections from State Papers*, Bombay. No. LXXVI.

[2] Parsons.

* Cf. the Arabic *dharbu*—'he struck'.

its loss, Dutch influence in the Persian Gulf came practically to an end. Of the Dutch fort scarcely a trace now remains, it having served as a quarry for building material which was exported, both to the mainland at Ganaweh and to Basra and Abadan, between 1914 and 1924.

After the departure of the Dutch, the English, in agreement with Kerim Khan, made a joint attack on Kharag—which Mir Muhanna had now made his place of residence—in order to put a term to his piratical depredations, which had become serious. The attack ended in failure. Muhanna's successful defiance of the English and the Persians was followed by an alarming prevalence of piracy on the part of his fleet, even on English vessels—which hitherto he had respected—and the trading vessel *Speedwell* was captured by him.

'From this time he commenced pirate,' says Parsons, 'fitting out his galliotes and other smaller armed vessels as cruizers. They took and plundered vessels and ships of every nation, and he became as great a terror to those who navigated in the Persian gulph, as the famous Angria had heretofore been in the East Indies.'

Kerim Khan, recognizing the futility of attempting the reduction of the fort of Kharag by bombardment, owing to the heavy guns mounted by Muhanna on the walls and bastions, resolved to effect its surrender by blockading the island and starving the garrison out. To this end, in 1769, he landed a large body of troops and artillery, and completely invested the place. At length, Muhanna, seeing the game was up, embarked on a dark night with a portion of his accumulated treasure and proceeded to Grane (Kuwait) and thence to Basra, where, later, he was put to death by the order of the Pasha of Baghdad. Thus ended the career of one of the most notorious robbers and pirates of the Persian Gulf, and Kharag reverted to Persia.

The British occupied the island with a view to bringing pressure to bear on Persia in 1838–42, and again during the Persian war of 1856–7, as will be described later. Proposals were afterwards brought forward to make it the head-quarters of the British in the Gulf, and Lieutenant-General Sir James Outram was in favour of this. He says: 'It appears to me that Karrack would also be a preferable position for the Resident in the Persian Gulf, as placing that functionary beyond the necessity of exercising the vexatious interference with Persian subjects which cannot be avoided while he is in this town (Bushire). The occupation of the island will not involve the necessity of our taking possession

of it as British territory.'[1] The proposal however came to naught, and beyond recording the fact that the island provides pilots for vessels coming up the Gulf bound for the Shatt al Arab, and furnishes stone from its quarries for road-making, it has no further place in our story.[2]

The centre of activities, both commercial and political, in the Gulf had by now completely shifted from the entrance to the head of the Gulf: the English had established factories at Basra, with the sanction of the Turkish authorities; and at Bushire, in agreement with Kerim Khan.

In 1769 however, owing to difficulties with Kerim, the English withdrew from Bushire in favour of Basra. This had the effect of drawing all the English trade to the latter port, to the detriment of Persia. In the spring of 1773 Basra and Baghdad were ravaged by one of the most direful plagues on record,[3] which necessitated the temporary return of the Agency to Bushire, and having sealed up their houses and recommended the factory to the care of the local government, the agents left Basra for Bombay in two English vessels, the *Tyger* and the *Drake*. Incensed as he was at the earlier action of the English in withdrawing from Bushire, Kerim ordered some of his galliots to waylay these vessels and endeavour to make prize of them. The *Tyger* was captured, taken to Bandar Rig, and two of the Company's servants who were on board were sent as prisoners to Shiraz and were not released for over a year. The plague ended, the English returned and reopened their Basra factory.

In 1775 differences arose between Kerim Khan and the Pasha of Baghdad over the manner in which Persian merchants and pilgrims were treated at Baghdad, Basra, and other places subject to the Turkish Government. Against this conduct the Vakil made frequent and spirited representations to the court of Constantinople, which either treated them with indifference or answered them with promises, not only never performed, but perhaps never intended to be performed. An attitude so insulting, aided by the clamours of his subjects, roused Kerim's anger, and

[1] *Lieut.-General Outram's Persian Campaign in 1857*, p. 385.

[2] Further details of the island, of much interest, are to be found in the following: Winchester, J. W.; Stiffe, A. W. (11); and 'The Island of Kharak or Charrack', *Asiatic J.*, 1838, Sept.–Dec.

[3] According to Parsons, the population was reduced by the plague from 300,000 to 50,000.

very early in the year 1775 he sent against Basra a large force, under the command of his brother, Sadiq Khan, in order, as he declared in a manifesto published on the occasion, 'to open the eyes of the sleepy Turk'. The city surrendered to the Persian forces in April 1776, and the Turkish *mutasellim*, or governor, was sent prisoner to Shiraz, where he was detained till the death of Kerim Khan.

On the capitulation of Basra, the representatives of the East India Company who, during the siege, had temporarily evacuated their factory, were at once replaced in possession of their property, which was found undamaged; but the Persian occupation of the town—which was purely military—was unfavourable to trade, and the outlook became so disheartening that the Agency was reduced to the status of a Residency, and the Company's activities were again largely transferred to Bushire, where the local administration was more favourably disposed. Basra remained in Persian hands until the death of Kerim Khan in 1779,[1] upon which Sadiq Khan, who had aspirations to the throne, immediately evacuated it, and the port peacefully reverted to Turkish jurisdiction.

At the time of the siege of Basra a squadron of ships of the Bombay Marine was lying in the Shatt al Arab, near the creek off the city. The attitude of the English traders during the siege was at first strictly neutral, but by force of circumstances they were drawn into the conflict. A fleet of fourteen gallivats of the Kaab tribe, in alliance with the Persians, having pushed unseen up the river above the town, some of the English vessels were sent to attack them. On the following day the Company's agents quitted their factory at Basra, and went on board the *Success* with their treasure and valuables, leaving the factory and bulk of their goods unprotected.

As fears were entertained that the Persian fleet, which was very considerable, might make an effort to push up the river, the commanders of the English vessels made every effort to prevent their junction with the army attacking from the north of the town, and in order to keep the enemy from breaking through, the British naval force set to work to construct a bridge of large boats employed in the passenger and goods traffic in the Basra creek. Having done this much, the English squadron weighed anchor and worked down the Shatt with the tide but a contrary wind,

[1] A noteworthy consequence of the Persian occupation of Basra was the migration of numbers of merchants to Kuwait; the growth and trade of the latter seaport being thereby much stimulated (see p. 250).

the Company's agent being desirous of proceeding to Bushire, and the commodore of attacking, *en route*, a Persian fleet of twelve gallivats and other armed vessels, of whose existence he had received information. At daybreak next day the Persian fleet was discovered in a creek about thirty miles below Basra. They were out of reach and appeared to be aground ; but, working down the river, the English vessels drove before them some other Persian gallivats coming up the stream. During the voyage across the head of the Gulf two small Persian vessels were captured, and on the 15th April the squadron arrived in Bushire Roads.[1] At this date, 1778, Bushire definitely became the English head-quarters in the Gulf, Basra then taking only a secondary place.

The occasional employment of ships of the Royal Navy, as distinct from the Indian Navy, in the Gulf, seems to have begun about this period. In 1771 the agent and council of the Company in Persia, clamouring for a strong expedition to be sent to the Persian Gulf to punish Kerim Khan for the trouble he had caused them, and to suppress piracy, which he seemed to condone, the Court of Directors in London passed the following remarkable order : ' If all efforts to put an end to the piratical views of the Persians and other powers in the Gulph, and to procure reparation of injuries, without having recourse to arms, shall prove ineffectual, you are to represent the same to the Presidency, that they may lay it before the Commanding Officer of H.M. Ships in the East Indies and endeavour to obtain such protection and assistance in the circumstances as the case shall require.'

The first instance of such use of vessels of the Royal Navy, of which there is record, was that of the *Seahorse*,[2] commanded by

[1] Low.

[2] It is of much interest that Nelson must have been a midshipman in this cruise of the *Seahorse*, for we are told that : ' Upon his return to England from the Arctic Seas, Nelson again, by his own choice, determined his immediate future. Within a fortnight of leaving the *Carcass*, he was, through his uncle's influence, received on board by the captain of the *Seahorse* of twenty guns, one of the ships composing a squadron that was just then fitting out for the East Indies. To quote himself, " Nothing less than such a distant voyage could in the least satisfy my desire of maritime knowledge ". During an absence of three years he, for much of the time, as formerly in his West India cruise, did the duty of a seaman aloft, from which he was afterwards rated midshipman and placed, this time finally, upon the quarter-deck as an officer. In the ordinary course of cruising in peace times, he visited every port of the station from Bengal to Bussorah ; but the climate, trying even to vigorous Europeans, proved too much for his frail health. After a couple of years he broke down and was invalided home, reaching England in September 1776. His escape

Captain George Farmer, which arrived at Bushire from Bombay in May 1775, at the time of the events detailed above. Captain Farmer seems to have received orders from his commodore to assist the East India Company in any place where 'he should happen to be where the Company had any settlement or factory, if it was requested by the Company's Servants',[1] and, in consequence of these instructions, he offered his services for convoying British vessels to Basra and protecting them there, notwithstanding the siege. The offer, however, was not accepted by the agent and, a little time after, the *Seahorse*, with several vessels under its protection, left Bushire for India, calling at Muscat on the way.

The Kaab. This formerly powerful people enter somewhat prominently into Persian affairs during the events just recorded. They have been fully described by many writers,[2] but a brief outline of their history is here necessary. The original home of the tribe is said to have been in Nejd, whence, in the seventeenth century, some made their way to Arabistan and occupied settlements of the Afshar Turks, hitherto the dominant people in this locality. Their power rapidly increased, and in the middle of the eighteenth century they wrested Dauraq and then Fallahiya from the Afshars, their progress being largely due to the energy and ability of their chief, Shaikh Salman, who ruled them till 1766. Salman obtained and maintained his virtual independence by playing off the Turkish and Persian authorities one against the other, between whose countries his territories lay; at the same time withholding tribute from both countries.

In 1757 Kerim Khan, whose authority in Persia was then not fully established, attacked the Kaab with the intention of subjugating them, but difficulties in other parts of his realm prevented his doing more than extort a tribute, and the attack only served to render Shaikh Salman more aggressive, for he at once set about creating a fleet, the first vessel of which was launched in 1758.

In 1765 Kerim sent a second expedition against the Kaab, in which the Turks had agreed to co-operate, but, in consequence of the unpreparedness of the latter, the shaikh, who by this time

from death was attributed by himself to the kind care of Captain Pigot of the *Dolphin*, in which ship he came back.' Mahan, *The Life of Nelson*, 1899.

[1] Parsons.

[2] Niebuhr (1) and (2); Layard (2); Rawlinson (3). See also *Selections from State Papers*, Bombay (1600–1800), No. CLXIV.

possessed a fleet of some twelve gallivats, besides a large number of trading vessels, crossed to the west side of the Shatt al Arab and found refuge in Turkish territory. Kerim, however, destroyed their capital, Dauraq. They now became troublesome in turn to the Turks, who commenced operations against them, and the English got drawn into the quarrel by rashly becoming allies of the Turks in the struggle. Various attempts made by the two powers, acting in concert, to subdue the Kaab proved unsuccessful.

Soon after the abortive Anglo-Persian attack on Kharag Island in 1765, recorded above, a new and sudden turn was given to political affairs in the Gulf by the sudden seizure by the Kaab of three British vessels in the Shatt al Arab. The Bombay Government speedily equipped the largest expedition that had sailed for many years from India for the Gulf, consisting of four vessels and a small detachment of European infantry and artillery. Concerted action between English and Turks followed by sea and land, and an attempt was made to recapture the seized vessels, but they were burnt at their moorings and the British, in attempting to storm some Kaab redoubts on Khor Musa, met with a disastrous repulse.

At this juncture Kerim Khan interposed, asserting that the Kaab were Persian subjects, and insisted that both Turks and English should retire from Persian territory. The Turks thereupon withdrew, and the campaign came again to an inconclusive end, much to the chagrin of the English, as strong reinforcements were on the way from Bombay. Kerim promised compensation to both parties for the losses inflicted upon them by the Kaab; on the English side, this amounted to an arrangement whereby, if they would make a serious effort to reduce the outlaw Mir Muhanna, the Vakil would obtain compensation for them and hand over the island of Kharag.

Following upon these repeated failures, the English maintained a naval blockade of the Kaab waterway for about two years, at the end of which time the vessels of the blockading squadron had fallen into such a ' melancholy condition . . . as well with respect to stores as men ', that the blockade had, perforce, to be raised. The Kaab remained unsubdued and continued for a long period to be a thorn in the side of Turks, Persians, and English in turn.

We now turn to the broader issues of Persian Gulf history, immediately subsequent to the definite establishment of the English at Bushire in 1778. On the death of Kerim Khan the next

year, Persia ceased to be the predominant state of the Gulf region; and, before many years had elapsed, became one of the feeblest and most disorganized. There was the usual fight for power among the members of the Zand family, which continued for a decade. Meanwhile Agha Muhammad Khan, a eunuch chief of the Qajar tribe, was gradually collecting a powerful force, and it became evident that the fight for supremacy between the Zand and Qajar families would have to be fought out. Lutf Ali Khan, a brave but tactless prince, represented the Zand dynasty, and was at first supported by one Haji Ibrahim, but the latter, disgusted at the cruelty and injustice of Lutf Ali, supported Agha Muhammad, and his influence was decisive. The last act of the struggle between Lutf Ali and Agha Muhammad saw the former besieged in the city of Kirman; when it was stormed, Lutf Ali fled to Bam, but was delivered up to the mercies of his enemy, by whom he was blinded and strangled; and the short-lived Zand dynasty fell (1794).

During this period of anarchy two events of considerable importance occurred in the history of the Gulf. In 1783 Persia lost Bahrain to the Utub Arabs, who crossed over from the mainland of Arabia and took possession of the island; these tribesmen still remain the most influential of its people and are connected with the ruling family. The other event, of even more far-reaching importance, was the rise of the Sultanate of Muscat. About the year 1793 Oman was dismembered, and Sayyid Sultan—a man of great natural force of character, of the ruling family of Imams, but a usurper—made himself master of the coast by seizing Muscat and other ports, and was invested with the chief authority in the coastal region;[1] whilst the titular Imam was left in possession of the interior, with Rostaq as capital. On his accession to power, one of the first acts of the newly constituted Sultan of Muscat was to occupy Gwadar on the Makran coast, whence he proceeded to capture Chahbar and to add it to his dominions. He then captured Qishm and Hormuz from the Bani Main, and as a result of this success the lease of Bandar Abbas and its dependencies, including Minab, passed from the shaikh of the Bani Main to the ruler of Muscat. But a new and more formidable enemy soon appeared on the horizon of Oman and Muscat, viz. the Wahabis of Central Arabia and their allies the Qawasim, described in the succeeding chapter.

[1] Badger; Ross, E. C.

For some considerable time prior to the rise of the Sultanate of Muscat, the East India Company had ineffectually endeavoured to establish trading relations with the ruling Imams of Oman. During the rule of Hamad, Sayyid Sultan's predecessor, the Company repeatedly made application for permission to establish a factory at Muscat, but were refused, and in 1785 the Company was still unrepresented at that port except by a native broker. It was not until the more enlightened rule of Sayyid Sultan that progress was made, and that the East India Company entered into political or commercial relations with Muscat. The first treaty made with Sayyid Sultan, in October 1798, aimed at securing his support against the suspected designs of the French, countering the commercial rivalry of the Dutch in this quarter, and obtaining the Sultan's sanction for the re-establishment of a British factory and garrison at Bandar Abbas. This agreement marks the beginning of the close political relationship with Muscat which was to develop as time went on.

The movements of the French in the Persian Gulf during the eighteenth century are of no little interest, as they mark the inception of a period of considerable activity on their part in this area. Early in the century, the factory which the French had at Bandar Abbas, to which reference has been made on p. 167, was closed down. In 1755 a French Residency was re-established at Basra, and in 1765 a Consul was appointed there. With this exception, from the end of the Seven Years War, 1763, to the beginning of the French Revolution, 1793, France was without any official representation in the Persian Gulf, but she maintained friendly relations with Oman, through Mauritius or Baghdad. In 1785 permission was sought of the Imam to establish a factory at Muscat but, like the requests of the British some time previously, was refused.

After the outbreak of war between France and England in 1793, a period of unrest and intrigue in the countries adjoining the Gulf began. France sent various ' missions ' to the Middle East, one of the most important of which was that of the two naturalists Bruguière and Olivier,[1] by order of the government, during the first years of the Republic. These delegates visited Turkey (1793), Egypt (1794–5), and in 1795 left Constantinople for Persia, passing by way of Aleppo and Baghdad and reaching Tehran in 1796. Here they had a series of interviews with the first minister of Shah Agha Muhammad Khan.

[1] Fully described by Olivier, G. A.

The first object of this mission (in so far as that object was political) seems to have been to discover in the Ottoman Empire some field in which the activities of the French nation might be deployed with advantage; and, in this connexion, the occupation of Egypt by the French was strongly recommended by them. The journey of the delegates to Tehran was an afterthought. From various remarks made in his work by M. Olivier, it may be conjectured that the objects of the visit were to arrange an alliance between Persia and Turkey against Russia, and to revive French influence in Persia; nothing, however, was done towards establishing or re-establishing French settlements at Isfahan, at Shiraz, and in the Gulf, or towards acquiring the island of Kharag for France—measures which it seems clear that M. Olivier had at least revolved in his mind.

The British Resident at Basra had early information of the movements of Bruguière and Olivier, and he reported to the government at Bombay that the intention of 'these gentlemen appears to be to penetrate in the assumed character of naturalists and botanists by the way of Baghdad through Persia into India'. Accordingly, instructions were sent to the British Resident at Bushire to co-operate with the Company's representative at Basra in tracing their movements, and, if possible, in arresting them and forwarding them to Bombay along with their papers. Nothing, however, transpired, and Olivier returned alone to France in 1798.

Other French agents were moving about in the Middle East at about the same time, and the presence at Muscat of persons of French nationality, or in the French service, was suspected: the movements of British vessels between India and the Persian Gulf appears to have been one of the principal subjects of their study. Their activities were the prelude of more serious activities on the part of the French, which will be described in the next chapter.

In 1798 began the period of the 'Napoleonic era' in the East, which lasted from Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt to the expulsion of the French from Mauritius at the end of 1810. During this time, the Government of India had to cope with very grave difficulties in the form of systematic depredations by French war vessels and privateers upon British sea-borne commerce, and became alarmed at the supposed designs of the French in Persia. The Persian Gulf was but a small part of the field over which the early Anglo-French struggle in Eastern waters was fought out, the base used by the French being the island of Mauritius, from

which the various routes of communication by sea were easily assailable. In 1799 the *Pearl*, a native vessel under the British flag, was captured by the French, who succeeded in carrying their prize to Muscat. This was only one of a numerous series of raids upon shipping which took place at intervals, until the surrender of Mauritius, in December 1810, to a naval and military force dispatched from India under General Abercromby, brought the vexatious activity of the French in the Eastern seas to an end.

XIII

PIRACY

'Sometimes I think that the record of the past is in danger of being forgotten, and there are persons who ask—Why should Great Britain continue to exercise these powers? The history of your States and of your families, and the present condition of the Gulf, are the answer. We were here before any other Power, in modern times, had shown its face in these waters. We found strife and we have created order. It was our commerce as well as your security that was threatened and called for protection. At every port along these coasts the subjects of the King of England still reside and trade. The great Empire of India, which it is our duty to defend, lies almost at your gates. We saved you from extinction at the hands of your neighbours. We opened these seas to the ships of all nations, and enabled their flags to fly in peace. We have not seized or held your territory. We have not destroyed your independence, but have preserved it. We are not now going to throw away this century of costly and triumphant enterprise; we shall not wipe out the most unselfish page in history. The peace of these waters must still be maintained; your independence will continue to be upheld; and the influence of the British Government must remain supreme.'

Lord Curzon's Speech to Trucial Chiefs, November 21, 1903.

WHEN Dr. Fryer visited the Persian Gulf in 1677, the people of Oman had already acquired the evil reputation of being 'a Fierce and Treacherous People, gaining as much by Fraud as Merchandise', and, speaking of the Arabs, he says: 'These are true Rovers both by Sea and Land; they are constantly upon the Plunder with the Portugals, but care not to engage where nothing is to be gotten but Blows, wasting those Places that lie most open on the Sea-coast and Unguarded.'[1] It was in the year 1695, however, during the rule of the Yaariba in Oman (see p. 82), that we have the first notice of the aggressive character of the maritime tribes of Arabia in the Persian Gulf, who subsequently caused so much trouble to the cruisers of the Indian Navy, and gave rise to expeditions against Ras al Khaima, on the Trucial Oman coast, in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Even earlier there were piratical incidents in these waters.[2] In

[1] Fryer (2).

[2] From the earliest times the west coast of India had been devastated by pirates. Pliny says, 'At the present day voyages are made from Egypt and Arabia to India every year: and Companies of archers are carried on board the vessels, as those seas are greatly infested with pirates.' Ptolemy speaks of their ferocity; and Marco Polo, in 1269, says: 'There go forth every year [from Gujerat] more than a hundred

1683 the East India Company's ship *President*, proceeding to Bombay from the Malabar coast, was attacked by two ships and four *grabs*,[1] manned by Arabs and hailing from Muscat. A hot action ensued, to the discomfiture of the pirates. In 1689 six piratical vessels, sheltering at Aden, Muscat, and Madagascar, captured a trading vessel belonging to Madras; and in the same year, according to Bruce,[2] an English pirate vessel even appeared in the Persian Gulf, the crew of which landed and plundered the Portuguese factory at the port of Kung.

The trouble which the Arab pirates would eventually give was foretold by Captain Brangwyn, one of the East India Company's naval officers at Bandar Abbas: 'They would prove', he said, 'as great a plague in India as the Algerines were in Europe'—a prediction which was amply justified. Captain Hamilton, soon after 1700, also wrote:

'The Pirates, for many Years, infested the Mouth of the Red Sea, committing frequent Robberies and Barbarities. Captain Evory was the first that led the Way, in anno 1695; and the Pirates finding great Booties, purchased with small Danger, from the traders into the Red Sea, had a Project to be Masters of the Key of that Door, so they found the Island Prim (Perim), which was within Gunshot of Babelmandeb, to have a good commodious Bay for the security of their shipping.'[3]

corsair vessels on cruise. These pirates take with them their wives and children, and stay out the whole summer. Their method is to join in fleets of 20 or 30 of these pirate vessels together, and then they form what they call a sea cordon, that is, they drop off till there is an interval of 5 or 6 miles between ship and ship, so that they cover something like an hundred miles of sea, and no merchant ship can escape them. For when any one corsair sights a vessel a signal is made, by fire or smoke, and then the whole of them make for this, and seize the merchants and plunder them. After they have plundered them they let them go saying: "Go along with you and get more gain, and that mayhap will fall to us." But now the merchants are aware of this, and go so well manned and armed, and with such great ships, that they don't fear the corsairs. Still mishaps do befall them at times.' Marco Polo, ii, p. 389.

[1] A name, now almost obsolete, applied to a kind of vessel which is constantly mentioned in the sea- and river-fights of India, from the arrival of the Portuguese down to near the end of the eighteenth century. The Rev. Howard Malcolm, in a glossary to his *Travels*, defined it as 'a square-rigged Arab vessel, having a projecting stern and no bowsprit; it has two masts'. Originally the word seems to have been an Arab name for a galley, s.v., *Hobson-Jobson*. It is still in use in the Persian Gulf in its original Arabic form *ghurab*, as a synonym for a mercantile steamship.

[2] Bruce, vol. iii.

[3] Hamilton, i, p. 43. Captain Hamilton gives an instance of the methods of the pirates: 'In anno 1696, they met with a ship from Bombay, commanded by one Sawbridge, who was carrying Arabian Horses for Surat. After they took the Ship, Sawbridge began to expostulate with them about their Way of Life. They ordered

'The strength of the Arabs at Muscat, in shipping and forces,' again wrote Bruce, 'was, at this time (1694–5), so great, as to excite an alarm that they would obtain the command of the Persian Gulf. The Agent at Gombroon reported the Arab fleet to consist of five large ships, on which they had embarked fifteen hundred men. They had plundered the Portuguese port of Kung, . . . had captured a very valuable Armenian ship; and apprehensions were entertained that they would attack Gombroon. . . . Navigation at the close of the year 1695–6 had become more difficult, from the growing power of the Muscat Arabs, still acting against the Persian trade.'

Again in 1697–8, according to Bruce, there was an alarming increase in piracy in the Indian Seas, and the depredations of the pirates seriously affected the East India Company's settlements and trade throughout the region.

The perpetration of acts of piracy, however, was by no means confined to the Arabs of Muscat. In 1696 five pirate ships flying English colours appeared in the Red Sea, and two others, each mounting fourteen guns, and having crews of one hundred and fifty men, plundered ships both in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea. Vessels fitted out for piratical depredations as far afield as New York appeared in the Eastern seas, and Captain Kidd, the notorious privateer, was operating at this time in Indian waters. Off Rajapur he plundered a vessel belonging to Bombay, and subsequently, after careening at the Laccadive Islands, went to Calicut, where he took a vessel, and made his escape on the appearance of the East India Company's ships. At Cochin he took three valuable Dutch prizes and then retired to St. Mary's in Madagascar, in which island the pirates had fortified stations where they were supplied with stores sent from New York and the West Indies.[1]

The Muscat Arab pirates were, nevertheless, the worst offenders, and so powerful did they become that they were soon able to oust the Portuguese from Mombasa, and not only pillaged Diu on the Malabar coast but, at the close of the seventeenth century, seized the Portuguese possessions on the African coast and founded the state of Zanzibar, which, as we shall see, until about the year 1860 was united with Muscat under the sway of the Sayyids of Muscat.

him to hold his Tongue, but he continuing his Discourse, they took a Saile-needle and Twine, sewed his Lips together, and so kept him several Hours, with his hands tied behind him. At length they unloosed his Hands and Lips, and carried him on board their Ship, and after they had plundered Sawbridge's Ship, they set her on Fire, and burned her and the Horses together—Sawbridge and his People were set ashore, where he died presently after.'

[1] Bruce, vol. iii. See further, Gosse, p. 8.

In 1698 the pirates, both Arab and European, grown bold by a long period of prosperity and the inertia of the East India Company, had regularly constituted themselves into fleets. A request was sent by the Company's agents in India to the home authorities for the dispatch of a squadron of men-of-war from England for the purpose of abating the nuisance, which not only endangered the Company's ships, but imperilled their trading privileges as well as their credit with the Mughal Emperor, who even accused them of being the 'authors of the piracies'. The credit of the Dutch (and the French also) with the Mughal was equally involved. Eventually, about 1700, some sort of working agreement between the various parties concerned—English, Dutch, and French—each of whose trading vessels were equally at the mercy of the marauders, was arrived at for their mutual protection. It was agreed between the parties to assign distinct stations to the squadrons of European ships which were to cruise against the pirates in Indian and adjoining waters. The protection of the Red Sea shipping was assigned to the Dutch; to the French, the Persian Gulf was given as a station; while to the English was entrusted the policing of what were termed the 'Southern Indian Seas'.[1] Enough has been said to show the seriousness of the danger which at the end of the seventeenth century menaced the very existence of English and other European traders, as well as the peace of the native states around Indian waters. The insufficiency of the measures proposed to stamp out the evil will soon appear.

The Wars against Pirates. We now come to a phase in the history of the Persian Gulf when less will be heard of our rights and privileges, but much of our responsibilities. We have already had evidence that the Arab dominion in the Gulf was, at various periods, the dominion of piracy, and very early in the evolution of the English power in Asia the obligation to control and suppress that evil forced itself upon the courageous men who, first at Surat and then in Bombay, were engaged in laying the foundations of our Eastern Empire. The Indian Navy, to which allusion has already been made, came gradually into being for the purpose of meeting these obligations, and 'the Gulf', says Low, 'afforded to the service a fresh field for the display of those qualities of enterprise and skill which they had already exhibited on the west coast of India'.

[1] Bruce, vol. iii, p. 275.

It is, however, to the period that we have now reached that the history of armed intervention in the Persian Gulf mainly belongs, for it was not until the Arab tribes were welded together at the end of the eighteenth and earlier part of the nineteenth centuries, and incited to pillage and outrage by the Wahabi emissaries, who had extended their influence from Central Arabia to the coast, that lawlessness in the Gulf reached its height. The Bombay authorities were slow in taking retributive, or even protective, measures. For many years the policy they pursued was one of non-intervention, varied only when some particularly flagrant depredation stirred them to action.[1]

The Wahabis. The middle of the eighteenth century saw the rise, in Arabia, of that sect of Moslem ascetic revivalists founded by Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahab, born at Ayina in Nejd in 1691, and who, as their opponents would not call them Muhammadans, have been distinguished by the name of the founder of their sect, and are called Wahabis. The tenets of Abdul Wahab and the history of the movement have been fully treated by various competent writers;[2] but the movement had such a profound effect upon the social and political affairs of the Persian Gulf during a large part of the nineteenth century, that an outline will not be out of place here, for, at first a purely religious movement, it afterwards, through force of circumstances, acquired a secular and political character.

In the beginning Wahabism was a reformation of Muhammadan doctrine and practice, inspired by the ideal of a return to the original purity of Islam, and it took the form chiefly of a protest against superstition and luxury in the Muhammadan world. It was, says Nöldeke,[3] 'a violent storm of puritanism against the prevailing apostasy. The Wahabites brought forward no new doctrine; they were thoroughly orthodox Moslems; but they broke with tradition thus far, that they sought to abolish certain abuses which had been tolerated or even approved by general consent. In this they proceeded with a strictness which reminds one more of Omar than of the Prophet. They were far from denying Muhammad to have been the Apostle of God, but they held in detestation the exaggerated honour which was paid

[1] Bennett, T. J.

[2] See: Brydges (3); Burckhardt; Corancez; Palgrave (2); Pelly (8); Maurizi; and Philby (3).

[3] Nöldeke, T.

to his name, his dwelling places, and his grave. The worship of saints they condemned as idolatry, and wherever they went they destroyed the saints' tombs and places of martyrdom. They wanted to restore the original Islam; for example, they took in earnest the legal prohibition against the wearing of silk and, in agreement with many learned theologians, interdicted tobacco as an innovation. The Kingdom which they founded was a copy of the original Islamic one; it once more re-united by force almost all the inhabitants of Arabia, but could not succeed in infusing a real spirit of religion into the great mass of Bedouins. Their strict spiritual discipline was particularly irksome to the inhabitants of Mecca—on the whole a very secularly disposed people.'

The Wahabis considered the Koran to be a sufficient guide for all the purposes of policy and morals, and insisted on the strictest observance of its maxims. It was thus that the right of conquest over infidels, the promulgation of the faith by fire and sword, and the right to dispose of the lives and properties of their prisoners, were preached, not merely as admissible, but indispensable duties, binding on all adherents of the true faith, which it was both cowardly and criminal not to carry into execution.[1]

The leading principle of the sect was, thus, to destroy and plunder all who differed from them; those Muhammadans who did not accept their creed were represented as far less entitled to mercy than either Jews or Christians. Wahabism from the first developed on militant lines and soon assumed the character of a national movement. After great successes, at the opening of the nineteenth century, the Wahabis were holding the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina and nearly all Arabia—including Hasa, Bahrain, and a part of Oman, but not Yemen—and were even threatening Mesopotamia and Syria. In the year 1800 the capture of the port of Qatif brought them down to the shores of the Persian Gulf, and in the same year they occupied the oasis of Biraimi and were threatening Oman itself (at this time under the rule of Sayyid Sultan) and the opposite coast of Persia. By 1803 they had established their supremacy over the whole Arabian coast of the inner Gulf, including that part known as the 'Pirate Coast', the home of the Jawasmi.

In 1809 the general power of the Wahabi state and its influence upon Persian Gulf affairs reached their highest point. Their local prestige upon the Pirate Coast was apparently but little shaken by the British capture of Ras al Khaima in that year, and

[1] Buckingham, J. S.

they turned their attention to Oman and, under a strong leader, Mutlaq, overran the districts round Muscat. But action ever provokes reaction, and Wahabi supremacy began to be seriously disputed from the west. In 1811 Muhammad Ali, Viceroy of Egypt, acting for the Ottoman Sultan,[1] after two years of serious preparation, commenced his campaign against the Wahabis.[2] In 1812 he recovered Medina, and Mecca and Jidda the next year, and the pilgrimage was once more thrown open. In 1814 the Wahabi cause suffered a great loss by the death of the amir Saud, their greatest military leader. As the Egyptian army obstinately pressed the attack, the Wahabi cause went steadily from bad to worse. In 1817–18, after some reverses, the Egyptians conquered Nejd and utterly destroyed the capital Daraiya, together with fortifications of every sort throughout the conquered region. They then annexed Hasa; but the strain of occupying so vast a territory as that which they had overrun became too great, and the same year the Egyptians evacuated Hasa, making it over to the Bani Khalid people, the original rulers of the district, to be held in dependence on the Porte; they claimed suzerainty over the territory which they had evacuated, though, in practice, this was only nominal. Shortly after, they withdrew also from Nejd to Hejaz.

It was but natural that the withdrawal of the Egyptians, under pressure of circumstances, should be followed by a revival of the Wahabi power—now guided by the able amir Turki, successor of Saud. Under Turki their position of influence in East Arabia was largely regained, and by 1833 the whole coast of the Persian Gulf acknowledged Wahabi rule and paid tribute; whilst its pressure was felt once more in Oman, where Sayyid Sa'id, ruler of Muscat, was also obliged to pay tribute to the amir.

Muhammad Ali, not satisfied with the nominal suzerainty to which the progress of events had reduced his authority, took

[1] Burckhardt says: 'When Mohammed Ali, in 1804, was appointed to Egypt ... the principal duty imposed on him by orders of the Porte was to attempt the reconquest of the holy cities. He was aware that to disobey these orders would be punished with removal from the government; and the Porte, to stimulate his exertions, promised him the Pashalik of Damascus for one of his sons, as soon as he should obtain possession of Mekka and Medinah. His own ambition also made that object highly desirable, as the deliverance of the holy cities would exalt him far above all other pashas of the Turkish empire, and add such celebrity to his name that the Porte might never afterwards be induced to oppose his interests.'

[2] The command of the Egyptian army was first under Tusun Pasha and then Ibrahim Pasha, sons of Muhammad Ali.

measures to reassert his power. Assembling a large force at Medina, he succeeded (1835–8) in re-establishing his control of Nejd. This effected, Hasa was occupied for a second time (1838–40), and the Gulf ports of Qatif, Saihut, and Uqair were garrisoned by Egyptian forces.

The strong hold which the Egyptians thus acquired in Hasa encouraged them to attempt to extend their authority to other of the territories of the Persian Gulf, in which the English had influence and interests. This tendency was actively opposed by the British Government, and a blockade of Qatif, Uqair, and other coast towns by English ships seemed imminent. Such opposition to Egyptian designs, and the difficulties which they experienced in occupying so vast a territory, soon brought about a retrograde movement of the Egyptian forces, and by 1840 Hasa and Nejd had been evacuated.

After the Egyptians had abandoned their attempt to exercise political control over the principalities on the Persian Gulf, the Wahabis regained their former influence, and the movement in general revived; but their activities were henceforward less dangerous and their innate fanaticism less in evidence.

The subsequent history of the movement does not materially affect our story of the Persian Gulf. It still retains its hold on Central Arabia, and has lost none of its pristine vigour. Wahabism is to-day not only all-powerful in Central Arabia, but is in effective control of Jidda, Mecca, and Medina; its frontiers march with those of Iraq and Trans-Jordan, and approach those of Syria. The influence of the Wahabi monarch is increasing in Asir, and may well extend in the near future to the whole Red Sea coast from Aden to Aqaba. That a kingdom so vast in extent, and containing such dissonant elements, should endure longer than the life of its creator seems unlikely, but wireless telegraphy and the motor-car have come to the aid of the camel, and if Abdul Aziz ibn Saud is successful in discovering and developing fresh sources of revenue, he may yet succeed, where his predecessors since the days of Muhammad failed, in creating a united Arabia, self-supporting in an economic sense, and at peace with its neighbours.

The Jawasmi. The term Qawasim (pronounced Jawasim, *Anglice* Jawasmi) has come to be used, in a wide sense, to designate all the tribes of the inner Gulf-coast of Oman—formerly known as the Pirate Coast, but now as Trucial Oman—who were engaged in

piracy.[1] This coast is monotonously low and sandy, and extends roughly 150 miles in a south-westerly direction from Ras Musandam towards the peninsula of Qatar; a coastal plain stretches for several leagues inland, to the foot of a low range of hills; the shore is full of shallow creeks, and lined by a labyrinth of shoals, reefs, and islands, rendering navigation difficult, even for native craft.

The towns on this coast are all built near the entrance of some *khor*, or salt-water inlet, and these maritime robbers, established here from very remote times,[2] not only made themselves dreaded by their neighbours, but defied all the efforts of the Portuguese to subdue them, and extended their depredations along the southern coast of Arabia, and even to the shores of India and the Red Sea. Chief of their towns was Sharja, the residence of the most noted of their chiefs, and Ras al Khaima,[3] formerly known

[1] More precisely, the term Qawasim refers to the subjects and followers of the Qasimi shaikh of the district of Sharja, to whatever tribe they might belong, whose head-quarters at this time was the coastal settlement of Ras al Khaima.

Less orthodox, but more picturesque, is the description given of them to Sir John Malcolm by an Arabian servant. 'They are', he says, 'of the sect of the Wahabees, and are called Jouassimee; but God preserve us from them, for they are monsters. Their occupation is piracy, and their delight murder; and to make it worse, they give you the most pious reasons for every villainy they commit. They abide by the letter of the sacred volume, rejecting all commentaries and traditions. If you are their captive, and offer all you possess to save your life, they say, "No! it is written in the Koran that it is unlawful to plunder the living, but we are not prohibited in that sacred work from stripping the dead"; so saying, they knock you on the head. But then, that is not so much their fault, for they are descended from a Houl, or monster, and they act according to their nature.' *Sketches of Persia*, p. 15.

The history of the Jawasmi is treated in full by the following authorities:

Saldanha, J. A., *Précis of Correspondence regarding the affairs of the Persian Gulf, 1801–53*, 1906; *Précis of Correspondence regarding the Trucial Chiefs, 1854–1905*; Buckingham; Low; Morier; Mignan (1); Palgrave (2); and in Bombay Selections, No. XXIV.

[2] 'This may be traced back to a very remote period. Ibn Haukal, in his version of the Koran, informs us that before the deliverance of the Children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, the subjects of a pirate monarch in these parts seized on every valuable ship which passed. The possession of a few ports within and near the entrance of the Persian Gulf, where it is not more than thirty miles across, enabled them to perceive and sally out on all passing vessels.' Wellsted (2).

[3] The origin of the name Ras al Khaima is of interest. 'The founder of the Joasmi towns was a Scek (Shaikh) named Giasom, who pitched his tent on a point of land a little elevated above the sea-shore which, being very conspicuous to all ships passing by, the sailors called the place Ras el Keima, which, in Arabic, signifies the point of the tent; and in process of time, a town being built, the original name was transferred to it.' Maurizi.

as Julfa. The latter is built on a sandy spit enclosing a deep, narrow bay protected by a bar. Vessels drawing fourteen feet cannot approach within two and a half miles of the shore. The coast from Sharja to Ras al Khaima is thinly planted with date trees and, being full of shallow creeks, is well calculated to afford protection to the peculiarly constructed boats of the pirate tribes.

The Jawasmi became increasingly aggressive after the death of Nadir Shah in 1747, when, as we have seen, Persian influence in the Gulf began to decline. They then directed their energy to exploiting the nearer parts of the Persian coast, and to promoting or opposing the policy of their neighbour, the Imam of Oman, as their interests of the moment dictated. In 1760 they obtained a footing on the island of Qishm, then held by the Main tribe, and also at Lingeh and Shinas, but when, by 1763, Kerim Khan Zand had established his rule over the south of Persia, they were expelled from these places. About 1777, one Saqar became Shaikh of the Jawasmi, and strengthened his position by marrying a daughter of the Shaikh of Qishm, thus adjusting his differences with the powerful Main tribe of this island.

The latter part of the eighteenth century saw the authority of the Wahabis acknowledged from the shores of the Persian Gulf almost to the frontiers of Mecca. For some years the Jawasmi held out against the Moslem reformer, but at length gave their adhesion to the new tenets, and their activities were thenceforward largely inspired by the Wahabis, their conquerors. For a long time, the Jawasmi only attacked native trading vessels, invariably giving the crews the option of conforming to their tenets or suffering death. As time went on, and they waxed in strength, they became bolder. In 1797 the Jawasmi made their first capture, off Rams, of a British vessel, the *Bassein*, carrying public dispatches, and took her into Ras al Khaima, where she was detained for two days and then released. No reparation seems to have been exacted for this insult—instructions to the officers of British ships were not to interfere with the piratical acts of the Arabs in the Persian Gulf, but only to act in self-defence—and, thus emboldened, some Jawasmi dhows next made an ineffectual attempt to capture the East India Company's brig *Viper*, of fourteen guns, lying in Bushire Roads.[1] Again no action beyond

[1] The Jawasmi dhows were at Bushire for the purpose of intercepting some vessels of the Imam of Muscat—with whom they were then at war—returning from Basra. No fear of any hostile intent was suspected by the *Viper*, which, on request, supplied the dhows with powder and shot, ostensibly to attack the Imam's vessels. Having

a demand of the Jawasmi shaikh for explanations, to which no satisfactory reply was forthcoming, was taken by the Bombay Government.

In 1803 Sultan bin Saqar succeeded to the chiefship of the Jawasmi, and became the ruling spirit in all their atrocities. Well aware that the hands of commanders of ships of the Bombay Marine were tied by orders not to take the initiative, even in self-defence,[1] his attacks on and captures of British ships became much more frequent. Roused at last to action, the Company's officers were directed to operate against these marauders, in conjunction with the Imam of Muscat. The combined forces accordingly proceeded, in 1806, to Qishm, where they blockaded the pirate fleet and reduced it to such distress that they sued for peace. A treaty was concluded in 1806 at Bandar Abbas, by which the Jawasmi shaikh agreed to restore vessels that had been captured and to 'respect the flag and property of the Honorable East India Company and their subjects'. For a brief period during 1807, overawed doubtless by the presence of a squadron of British cruisers stationed in the Gulf, they kept their word.

It was not long, however, before the Jawasmi again became aggressive. During the year 1808 they captured no less than twenty native vessels, and, elated at their success, attacks on British vessels began again. The most serious was that on the *Minerva*, a merchant ship proceeding from Bombay to Bushire, which met with a large fleet of pirates near Qais, and after a running fight of two days was carried, according to their usual custom, by boarding. The commander, with full knowledge of the cruel fate which awaited him, attempted to blow his vessel up, but unfortunately failed, and the slaughter of the victims commenced. The ship was first 'purified' with water and perfumes, and, this accomplished, the different individuals were bound and brought forward singly to the gangway, where one of the pirates cut their throats, in the name of God.[2] The mate

received it, they treacherously and without warning, attacked the *Viper* with her own powder and shot while at anchor, when her crew were at breakfast. The *Viper*, with great promptitude, slipped her cable and made sail to escape being boarded. In the engagement which followed, she not only beat off her assailants but chased them out to sea.

[1] 'The Governor of that period, from ignorance of the character of this people, could never be persuaded that they were the aggressors, and constantly upbraided the officers with having, in some way, provoked the attacks of which they complained—continuing still to insist on the observance of the orders, in not firing on these vessels until they had first been fired at by them.' Buckingham. [2] Wellsted (2).

and carpenter were alone spared, probably as their services might be useful, and an Armenian lady was carried away captive, but in accordance with Arab custom no indignity was offered to her, and a few months later she was ransomed.[1] The *Minerva* was taken to Ras al Khaima, where twenty guns were mounted on her, and she was sent to cruise with the rest of the pirate fleet in the Gulf.

Not long after, the Company's small cruiser *Sylph* was captured, and only three days later, near Qishm, the Jawasmi pirates attempted to capture the brig *Nautilus* of fourteen guns, but met with a warm reception at the hands of the commander.[2] These repeated aggressions, coupled with an insolent demand made by the chief of Ras al Khaima, whose harbour was the principal resort of the larger pirate craft, for the payment of tribute by the Bombay Government, in order that their merchant ships might be permitted to traverse the waters of the Gulf unmolested, at length opened the eyes of the Governor of Bombay and Court of Directors of the East India Company to the fatal impolicy and, indeed, absurdity of the instructions enjoined upon their naval officers. They realized that it was high time to make a hostile move, if British trade was not to be driven out of the Persian Gulf entirely.[3] Few merchant vessels, without the convoy of a ship of war, now ventured to sail between India and the Gulf, while native boats became subjected to almost certain interception and plunder.

[1] 'The most undaunted bravery was certainly theirs,' says Wellsted. 'If taken, they submitted with resignation to the fate they inflicted on others; and when they fell into the hands of the Persians, or any nations by which they are surrounded, they were never spared. After the destruction of one of their forts, several of them were brought on board our ships as prisoners. While uncertain of their fate, and before their wounds were dressed, it was asked what treatment they anticipated. "The same immediate death as we should have inflicted on you, had your fortune been ours," was the stern and characteristic reply.' Op. cit.

[2] Of this incident, Buckingham, who acquired his information from those engaged in the Persian Gulf at the time, says, 'the *Nautilus*, carrying dispatches, was attacked by a squadron of pirates, consisting of a baghalah, a dhow, and two trankies; the two former mounting great guns, the others having oars as well as sails, and all being full of armed men. The attack was made in the most skilful manner, the two larger vessels bearing down on the starboard bow, and the smaller ones on the quarter. As Lieutenant Bennett (the Commander) had received the same positive orders as his brother officers, not to commence an attack until fired on, he reserved his guns until they were so close to him, that their dancing and brandishing of spears, the attitude with which they menace death, could be distinctly seen, and their songs and war shouts heard.'

[3] Low.

The decision was the more insistent as the whole of the Pirate Coast, by this time, had fallen under the direct control of the Wahabis. The Wahabi chief, Saud, having enticed Saqar, the Jawasmi chief, to Deraiya, the Wahabi capital, where he confined him,[1] appointed one Husain bin Ali, Saqar's cousin, as his vicegerent over the Pirate Coast, and nominated Wahabi officers throughout the country. Husain was vested with authority to compel all Jawasmi chiefs to send their vessels to sea to cruise in the service of the Wahabi shaikh, against all vessels in the Persian Gulf without exception, and reserved one-fifth as his share of their plunder, the remainder being divided among the captors.[2] This organized system of piracy created such terror among all the maritime Arab tribes of the Gulf that they obeyed without reserve the mandates of Saud, rather than incur the vengeance that awaited all who thwarted his will. According to authentic information, the Jawasmi fleet now comprised sixty-three large vessels and over eight hundred smaller ones, manned by nineteen thousand men; and, after the capture of the *Minerva*, a fleet of seventy sail, with crews averaging between eighty and two hundred men, was cruising about the Gulf and even threatening Bushire!

To curb the activities of this formidable force, a naval and military expedition was at length sanctioned by the Bombay Government. Its principal object was to destroy the power of the Jawasmi and to release British subjects and others held by them in bondage; a secondary object was to restore the power and prestige of Sayyid Sa'id of Muscat, at this time threatened with invasion by the Wahabis. The expedition sailed from Bombay in September 1809, with Captain Seton in political charge.[3]

[1] He subsequently escaped to Muscat.

[2] Bombay Selections, No. XXIV. *Historical Sketch of the Joasmee Tribe*, by Mr. F. Warden.

[3] The instructions to Captain Seton were drawn up with such a degree of caution and forbearance towards the Wahabi, as to appear to denote an intention to truckle to them, and resulted in rendering nugatory the fruits of the expedition. 'All operations by land were to be avoided, otherwise than might be momentarily necessary for the more effectual destruction of the pirate vessels in their harbours; and in any case, Captain Seton was to be careful to make it known in due time to the Wahabee and the officers of his Government, that it was our sincere wish to continue, at all times, on terms of friendship with him and with the other States of Arabia (which were all in subjection to the Wahabees), desiring only to provide for the security of the general commerce of the seas, and of the Gulf of Persia in particular, so long and so unjustifiably interrupted by the Joasmis, in breach, also, of a positive treaty concluded with their chief in 1806; the motives and objects of our interposition, involving no views of aggrandisement on our part, but being

After a long passage it reached Muscat, and then proceeded to Ras al Khaima, against which place the first operations were directed.

The attack on Ras al Khaima commenced by a bombardment. The Jawasmi, who did not belie their reputation for courage and resource, were vigorously attacked by sea and land, and after a bloody but ineffectual resistance were driven into the interior. The town, with the vessels in port, numbering upwards of fifty and including the prize ship *Minerva*, were burnt. The expedition then sailed for Lingeh, another flourishing port of the Jawasmi, which was occupied without resistance; and then for Laft, on Qishm Island, which surrendered and reverted to the ruler of Muscat. Other Jawasmi ports, both on the Persian and Arabian shores, were reduced and their craft destroyed. The bulk of the expeditionary force returned to India in 1810.[1]

It was the prevalent opinion at Bombay that, by these operations, the Jawasmi had been rendered quite incapable of committing further depredations at sea; but they never appeared to lose either energy or spirit. They built or purchased new vessels, erected other forts, and, after a brief interval, renewed their outrages. During 1810–11 there was, it is true, a complete cessation of piracy, as certain of the Company's cruisers kept watch in the Gulf; but the next year the Jawasmi showed signs of returning to their nefarious practices. In 1813 and 1814 Sayyid Sa'id of Muscat, with the moral support of the British, endeavoured to re-establish his influence over the Jawasmi at Ras al Khaima, but was only partially successful. The attitude of the Government of India towards the Wahabis and the Jawasmi, during the critical years immediately following the expedition of 1809, was undecided, and in consequence the fruits of that effort were largely lost. A Wahabi envoy visited Persia in 1811–12, and made overtures to the British Resident at Bushire for the establishment of mutual amity and commercial relations; but the Government of India, while not disinclined to encourage friendly intercourse, declined to enter into a treaty with the Wahabi amir. Towards

altogether limited by the repression of maritime depredations (such as is equally condemned by the professors of every religion), and the just support of our ally, the Imaum of Muscat, cannot reasonably give offence to any other State or Government.' Low, i, p. 325.

[1] The interested reader is referred to a rare series of coloured reproductions of sixteen drawings by R. Temple of H.M. 65th Regt., depicting these events, published April 1813, by W. Haines of South Molton St., London.

the end of 1814, an emissary bearing letters from the amir and the shaikh of the Jawasmi appeared at Bushire, and a preliminary agreement for the discontinuance by the Jawasmi of their attacks upon vessels under the British flag, for the restitution of property, and for the adoption of a distinguishing flag, was executed, but remained a dead letter. In these circumstances of inaction on the part of the British Government, piratical offences recommenced and rapidly increased.

Attacks were made first on native craft, but were gradually extended to vessels bearing the British pass and, finally, to vessels carrying British colours. Captures were made by the Jawasmi over a wide area, even including the Red Sea and Indian waters, though their chief repudiated all connivance. The success that attended the cruises undertaken by the Jawasmi added so much to their strength that it induced most of the other ports of the Gulf to follow the practice: the Shaikh of Kharag, in particular, was encouraged to form a connexion with Ras al Khaima; and the chief of Bahrain openly avowed his intention to adopt piracy, as the surest mode of acquiring wealth and power. In January 1816 the East India Company's armed vessel, *Deriah Dowlut*, manned entirely by natives of India, was attacked by Jawasmi, off Dwarka near the Gulf of Cutch, and eventually taken by boarding. Out of thirty-eight souls on board, seventeen were killed or murdered, eight carried prisoners to Ras al Khaima, and the remainder landed on the Indian coast. Other acts of piracy, too numerous to mention, followed, and at last, in 1816, the authorities were impelled to make a demonstration before Ras al Khaima and demand reparation. A futile attack was made upon the town, but no satisfaction was obtained and piracy still flourished.[1]

The force at the disposal of the Jawasmi at this time was estimated at sixty large vessels belonging to Ras al Khaima, carrying from eighty to three hundred men each, besides forty others of smaller size distributed over the various ports of Sharja and Rams on the Arabian, and Laft, Lingeh, and Charak on the Persian, coast. With this formidable fleet they not only made raids

[1] About this time the Jawasmi contemplated forsaking Ras al Khaima and forming a settlement at Basidu (Bassadore) on the western extremity of the island of Qishm, where the Portuguese formerly had a fortified settlement with large reservoirs for water. They were alarmed at the rapid success of Ibrahim Pasha's Egyptian army over the Wahabi power and apprehended that, after the reduction of Qatif, the next operations of the Egyptian general would be directed against their own capital. Information of this intention being received in India, the British naval squadron in the Persian Gulf had orders to prevent their carrying it into effect.

on the Persian coast but committed depredations even on the coast of India. There were various engagements and pursuits of pirates by British cruisers and, on occasion, defeats were inflicted by British vessels on isolated squadrons of the Jawasmi; but these sporadic successes failed to put a term to their larger activities. It was abundantly clear that more decisive measures were necessary if piracy in the Persian Gulf was to be extinguished.

At last, in 1819, a powerful expedition[1] was assembled at Bombay and placed under the supreme political and military command of Major-General Sir William Grant Keir; and this time there was a firm resolve that operations should be final and conclusive. The fleet proceeded first to a rendezvous at Qishm. Here it was joined by a strong co-operating force of Sayyid Sa'id of Muscat, and proceeded to Ras al Khaima. The troops were landed about two miles from the town under the protection of the armed launches of the squadron, the Sayyid's men working with energy in bringing up guns and ammunition to the batteries. Much resistance was encountered, but after a siege of six days, during which many deeds of heroism were performed, the town was captured 9th December 1819. All the Jawasmi boats were burnt or taken, and the forts razed to the ground. On the British side, the total killed in the operations was one officer and four men, while the casualties of the enemy were admitted to be about four hundred killed and wounded. The expedition then proceeded against the remaining piratical harbours upon the coast and, having achieved its purpose, returned to Bombay.[2]

[1] The troops numbered three thousand and sixty-nine fighting men, of whom about one thousand six hundred were Europeans. The naval force, under the command of Captain F. A. Collier, C.B., consisted of H.M.S. *Liverpool*, fifty guns; *Eden*, twenty-six guns; *Curlew*, eighteen guns; besides a number of the Company's ships, including the *Teignmouth*, *Benares*, *Aurora*, *Nautilus*, *Ariel*, and *Vestal*. Besides these, a number of vessels were engaged in cruising about the Gulf during the operations. The whole formed by far the most powerful assembly of British vessels which, up to this time, had appeared in the Persian Gulf. Low.

[2] Experience had shown that the pirate fleets had often escaped the vigilance of our cruisers by taking refuge in the innumerable coves with which this part of the coast of Arabia is indented, and into which the fear of unknown dangers prevented our vessels from following them. The Indian Government, therefore, at once resolved that a minute examination should be made of the coast; and to this expedition science is indebted for those magnificent early surveys of the Arabian and, later, of the Persian coasts, prosecuted under great difficulties and privations owing to the perilous nature of the navigation, the jealous and hostile character of the natives, and the still more deadly effects of the climate. The result was satisfactory, not only in adding to our geographical knowledge, but in furnishing the authorities with a full account of the several tribes, their conditions and resources.

Negotiations followed for a treaty of peace. As a first step, each principal shaikh of the Pirate Coast was required to sign a preliminary agreement; and not until he had done so, and had fully discharged its obligations, was he allowed to become a party to the General Treaty of Peace, which was concluded the 8th January 1820.[1] In this important general treaty Bahrain joined. A strong squadron of vessels was stationed for some time at Ras al Khaima to enforce the fulfilment of its stipulations and for the surveillance of the coasts, and Basidu, on Qishm Island, became the naval base of the British vessels employed in the preservation of order in the Gulf.

The complete establishment of order was necessarily a gradual process, for the time-honoured practice did not immediately disappear; minor piracies occurred from time to time, but even such cases—when they could not be attributed to quarrels between rival Arab chieftains—did not often affect the vessels of foreigners, though strong remonstrances were occasionally necessary to remind them of the conditions of their agreement. After the signature of the General Treaty, all the Jawasmi ports, with the exception of Ajman, acknowledged the general supremacy of Shaikh Sultan bin Saqar of Ras al Khaima.

The Bani bu Ali. Reference should here be made to an isolated episode in the history of piracy, in which the Sultan of Muscat and the British were jointly concerned. In 1820 the Bani bu Ali, a warlike independent tribe, of the Jaalan district in the south-east of Oman, having been charged with complicity in certain piratical outrages, a joint British, Indian, and Omani force was sent against their chief settlement, but suffered defeat. An attack on their village ended in an ignominious rout, by a charge of Bu Ali swordsmen, and the attacking force fell back with a loss of seven British officers and two hundred and seventy Sepoys. The remnants of the force returned to Muscat.

It was now necessary to rehabilitate the military reputation of Britain in Oman, and the following year a strong expedition was dispatched from Bombay. The British force arrived before Balad Bani bu Ali in March 1821, where the skeletons of their predecessors still strewed the ground. The warriors of the tribe attempted to repeat their formerly successful tactics, but the onrush of swordsmen was stemmed after some stiff fighting; the Bu Ali were defeated and laid down their arms. A number of the tribe

[1] Aitchison, xxxviii.

a. DUTCH VESSEL AT HORMUZ, 1638

b. BASIDU, ON THE ISLAND OF QISHM

were conveyed as prisoners to Oman and Bombay. After an interval of two years, they were repatriated at the expense of the Government of Bombay, but the tribe has never fully recovered the position which it once held in Oman.[1]

As time went on, the insufficiency of the General Treaty of Peace of 1820 for maintaining complete security at sea became apparent, because of the incessant quarrels of the various shaikh-chiefs among themselves, and a reconsideration of the whole question became urgent. The treaty of 1820 did not deny the right of the chiefs to carry on war with each other by sea, that is to say, war proclaimed and avowed by one chief upon another. All other hostile aggressions, however, were declared to be piratical. But, under the name of 'acknowledged' war, many acts of piracy on one another were committed, especially during the pearl-fishery season.[2] The chiefs were therefore induced, in 1835, to bind themselves by a Maritime Truce not to engage, under any circumstances, in hostilities by sea for a period of six months, on the understanding that the British Government would not interfere with their wars by land. The good effects of this truce were so marked that the chiefs were easily persuaded in the following year, and again in 1837, to renew it for eight months. Thereafter it was renewed annually till 1843, when it was prolonged for a period of ten years.[3]

Notwithstanding, there were still occasional quarrels between the chiefs, and acts of aggression, mainly on the part of Sultan bin Saqar, which called for intervention and a slight show of force on the part of the British; but, generally speaking, no very serious cases of piracy occurred thenceforward. When the period of the Ten Years' Maritime Truce ended, an agreement of a still more permanent nature, known as the Treaty of Peace in Perpetuity,[4] was concluded in May 1853. The terms were similar to those of the Ten Years' Truce, but included an important additional stipula-

[1] The most interesting account of these incidents, as an eyewitness, is given by Mignan. See also Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, 1856; Low; and Badger.

[2] The treaty, while it prohibited 'plunder and piracy' at sea, proved to be no guarantee against warfare and rapine between the petty Arab states that were signatories to it, and a desire sprang up, on the part of some of them, for further restrictions upon the use of force. When inter-tribal war at sea prevailed in the summer months, it prevented or disturbed the pearl-diving operations, which were the main resource of these seafaring peoples. It became clear that if such hostilities could be confined to the off-season, the change would be a boon to all.

[3] Aitchison, xlii.

[4] *Idem*, xliii.

tion, viz. that the ' perfect maritime truce ' now established ' for evermore ' should be watched over and enforced by the British Government: that, in fact, in the event of aggressions on any one of the parties by sea, the injured tribe should not itself retaliate, but refer the matter to the British authorities in the Gulf.

Thus, after much effort and great sacrifices, did England bring about peace in the waters of the Persian Gulf, a peace which other nations—and too many Englishmen—are prone to regard as the almost spontaneous concomitant of the increasing power which modern weapons and organized naval forces conferred upon European powers in Eastern waters. When, in 1820, England made the General Treaty with the chiefs of the maritime tribes, it was not her own protection alone that she sought. In forcing the tribes to abandon piracy ' against any nation whatsoever ', she was solicitous for the common good, and was securing other nations as well as herself.[1]

No account of the history of the Persian Gulf at this period would be complete without some reference to the notorious free-booter, Rahma bin Jabir, a native of Grane (Kuwait), who for more than twenty years, from about 1800, was the terror of these waters and perhaps the most successful pirate that ever infested any sea. He was for several years closely associated with the Wahabis, but his ruling motive was enmity towards the shaikhs of Bahrain, and when in 1816 the Sultan of Muscat prepared to attack Bahrain and the Wahabis took the side of the shaikh, Rahma broke with his former allies and joined the ruler of Oman. He helped the Egyptians in their successful operations against the Wahabis and was rewarded by being placed in possession of the coast settlement of Dammam, in Hasa, where he built himself a fort, and which thenceforward he made his head-quarters, taking shelter at times also at Bushire. With five or six vessels, most of which were very large and manned by crews of from two to three hundred each, he sallied forth to capture whatever he might think himself strong enough to carry off as his prize: vessels of Kuwait, Basra, Bahrain, Muscat, and even of Bushire, fell equally a prey to him. Of this romantic figure, Buckingham says: [2]

' His followers, to the number perhaps of two thousand, are maintained by the plunder of his prizes; and as these are most of them his own bought

[1] Bennett. [2] *Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia.*

African slaves, and the remainder equally subject to his authority, he is sometimes as prodigal of their lives in a fit of anger, as he is of those of his enemies, whom he is not content to slay in battle only, but basely murders in cold blood, after they have submitted. This butcher chief affects a great simplicity in dress, manners and living; and whenever he goes out, he is not to be distinguished by a stranger from the crowd of his attendants. He carries this simplicity to a degree of filthiness which is disgusting, as his usual dress is a shirt, which is never taken off to be washed from the time it is first put on till it is worn out.

'In appearance, Rahma bin Jabir's figure presented a meagre trunk, with four lank members, all of them cut and hacked and pierced with wounds of sabres, spears and bullets, in every part, to the number perhaps of more than twenty different wounds. He had, besides, a face naturally ferocious and ugly, and now rendered still more so by several scars there, and by the loss of one eye. In his closing years, Jabir was rather a petty territorial ruler than a pirate. He had always carefully abstained from offences against the British Government and subjects; nevertheless, his death conduced to the establishment of a more settled state of affairs in the Gulf.'

In 1816, having deserted the Wahabi cause and joined with the Sultan of Oman in an attack on Bahrain, then more or less under Wahabi control, Jabir was obliged to seek an asylum in Persia, and his fort at Dammam was blown up by the Wahabis. He re-established himself at Dammam in 1818, and was for some time a participator in the feuds which then raged between the various states on the Arabian side of the Gulf. Eventually he quarrelled with the shaikhs of Bahrain, and in an encounter at close quarters between his vessel and that of an opponent, seeing his case was up, he blew up his vessel with his own hand, and perished along with all his companions. Throughout his life he showed his prudence in avoiding direct collision with the British, and, from the friendliness of his personal relations with some of the authorities at Bushire, it may be inferred, in spite of Buckingham's censorious description of him, that he possessed redeeming qualities.

Basidu. In connexion with the British operations against the pirates, the Bombay Government, subsequent to the operations at Ras al Khaima, contemplated the establishment of a naval base, in as central a position as possible in the Persian Gulf—a station which would render the suppression of piracy easier, and at the same time be suitable for the transference thither, from Bushire, of the Residency. Various places—Ras al Khaima,

Qishm, Daristan (opposite Hanjam), Qais, Salakh—were examined and rejected for one reason or another. Eventually, Basidu, on the north-western extremity of Qishm Island, became (1822–3) the British naval head-quarters, but was soon abandoned owing to its intolerable climate and the lack of local supplies. The site at the present day consists of a few huts, a large cemetery, a derelict hospital building, and a small coal and stores depot, which is in charge of a native agent and on which the British flag still flies occasionally.

XIV

THE SLAVE TRADE

'It is interesting to discuss the institution of slavery with earnest Mohammedans. Their progressive leaders frequently admit that slavery is inconsistent with Mohammedanism and apologize for it. Men of this type, however, are uncommon and such opinions are expressed in private. In public the institution enjoys all the prestige that entrenched privilege enjoys everywhere, and any criticisms of it in the gatherings of the rich and great calls forth horrified protests. . . . Religion endorses it, the social order demands it.' HARRISON, *The Arab at Home*, 1924.

THE attitude in the seventeenth century towards the trade in slaves, of the British Government—which during the last century has played a principal part in the suppression of this traffic, and nowhere more so than on the East African coast and in south-western Asia—may be gathered from a chance remark of Herbert in his *Chronicles of the Dodmore Cotton Mission*. He tells us that on the ship *William*, in which the ambassador proceeded with his staff from Surat to Gombrun in 1626, 'above three hundred slaves were put on board, whom the Persians had bought in India, viz. Persees, Jentews, Bannaras and others, whereby it appears that ships besides the transporting of riches and rarities from place to place, consociate the most remote Regions of the Earth by participation of commodities and other excellencies to each other'.[1] In 1772 it was decided by the English courts that as soon as he set his foot on the soil of the British Isles a slave became free; but the trade in slaves and the owning of slaves continued under the British flag until an Act was passed, in 1807, whereby it became illegal for any vessel to clear for slaves from a port in the British Dominions or, after 1808, to land slaves in a British colony; and in 1811 the traffic was declared to be felony and was punishable with transportation. In 1833, as a result of much agitation in England, and despite the powerful opposition of vested interests, proprietary right in slaves was abolished throughout the British dominions, and their final liberation was effected by 1838. Matters then moved apace; other nations came gradually into line with Britain on the question, and in 1890 the 'General Act of the Brussels Conference', which

[1] Herbert (2).

had for its object the repression of the African slave trade, came into being.[1]

Having stated the general attitude of Britain, we may proceed to inquire by what means and to what extent we have given effect to the obligation we voluntarily assumed, to suppress the traffic in slaves in the Persian Gulf. Composed, as the Gulf region is, of a number of separate and largely independent political entities, the process has naturally been complicated, slow, and gradual.

Those responsible for action against slave traders and owners had to bear in mind that, whatever views might be taken in the nineteenth century by some European nations, the status of slavery was legally recognized by the Koran. Horrible as often were the conditions in which slaves were transported, nefarious as were the means adopted to obtain them, the conditions in which the slaves, thus obtained, lived, when once they had reached their final destination, were generally better than those prevalent in the country of their birth. The Islamic law conferred on them certain legal rights: thus, masters were legally bound to treat slaves well, to feed and clothe them, and maintain them until their death; to provide every male slave with a spouse, and to maintain their offspring. The life of a slave in Arabia, if hard, was certainly no harder than that of the average Arab, and probably less arduous than that of an African tribesman. It was emphatically not a degraded life: slaves habitually rose to high positions of trust, and having embraced Islam were eligible, under well-understood conditions, to obtain their freedom, by purchase or by the formal act of their masters—an act which is specifically enjoined by the Koran as one of great religious merit. Large numbers became free men every year, and were assimilated in the general population on a basis of perfect equality: their powerful physique, their courage, and their reputation for trust-

[1] Certain provisions of this act had an important bearing on the traffic in the Persian Gulf. Art. 27 provided that a slave taking refuge on board a man-of-war of the signatory powers must be immediately and definitely liberated. Art. 28 stated that the liberation of a slave detained against his will on board a native vessel might be pronounced by any agent. Art. 42 enacted that warships of the signatory powers were authorized to stop and, if necessary, to arrest, on the high seas, vessels of less than 500 tons, suspected of being engaged in the slave trade.

The Act was ratified by Great Britain, France, and Turkey, the three powers chiefly concerned in Persian Gulf waters, on 2nd January 1892, and actually came into force on 2nd April 1892.

Certain important reservations were made regarding the right of search of craft under the French flag, by foreign war vessels.

worthiness ensured such men the respect of their neighbours and opportunities of advancement. Such a system could not be destroyed by legal enactments, though backed by the whole power of the Royal Navy.

The source of the slaves imported into the Gulf was Eastern Africa, the whole of the negro population of which were liable to capture. Those regions formed a preserve which was worked by the Arabs; the only exceptions were the Somalis inhabiting the country around Cape Gardafui, who are *hurr*, or not lawfully held in bondage by the Muhammadans; and a few mixed races living under the doubtful protection of the Portuguese flag. 'The remaining population were at the mercy of the Arab or negro sportsman, and sold themselves, were shot down, netted, decoyed, speared, bought or kidnapped, without the intervention of any game laws or regulations for the preservation of the breed.' [1] The ports of export were Kilwa, Zanzibar, Juba, and Brava.

The time of the traffic was the period of the south-west monsoon, from May to September: the trading vessels could conveniently run down to Zanzibar from Arabia, the Gulf, and India for purposes of legitimate commerce, on the course of the north-east monsoon from October to April, to return after this period with the certainty of making quick and convenient coasting voyages. In practice, the outward and homeward journeys were confined to a very small number of months in the year, and to one journey each way annually.

The destination of the slave harvest cannot be so clearly defined.

'We can trace the unfortunate "desirability" from the first acquirement round about the lake district of Africa to the port of export, through the general market, all along the coasts of Africa and Arabia to the vicinity of Ras al Hadd; but there we lose him. We, however, find him after his final sale, as a pearl diver in the shallows of the green waters of Oman, as the familiar dependent and domestic of the Arab gentleman, or as the servant of the Persian merchant.' [2]

From another source we learn that 'they go even up to Bussorah and Mohamrah, and from thence I have no doubt some find their way into Turkish harems'.[3]

There was no central depot for the reception and marketing of slaves in the Persian Gulf. The Resident in the Gulf, writing in 1844, says: 'Muskat and Sur are the principal primary ports to which slaves, from whencesoever shipped, whether Zanzibar or

[1] Colomb, Captain, R. N. [2] *Idem.*

[3] Report from the Select Committee on the Slave Trade, 1871.

the Red Sea, are brought, and whence they are eventually carried into Turkey, Persia, Sind, the Arab States, and even our own territories on the Western Coast of India.' [1] The same authority states that during the months of August, September, and October, 1841, 117 vessels, carrying 1,217 slaves, touched at the island of Kharag near the head of the Persian Gulf. Later, in the sixties, the Resident at Muscat was under the impression that about 4,000 of the 13,000 slaves estimated to pass up were landed either at Ras al Hadd or at the adjacent port of Sur.

The progress made in the suppression of this traffic will appear from an examination of the main agreements and engagements successively entered into with the individual rulers and chiefs of the separate Gulf territories. In her efforts to put down the traffic in Persian Gulf waters, England had no help from any of the Powers; some countries on the contrary placed difficulties in her way.

The earliest evidence of the trend of British policy in this regard appears in the General Treaty entered into at Ras al Khaima, with the Jawasmi chiefs, after the successful expedition of 1820. Article 9 of this agreement ran: 'The carrying off of slaves, men, women or children, from the Coasts of Africa or elsewhere, and the transporting of them in vessels, is plunder and piracy, and the friendly Arabs shall do nothing of this nature.' [2] This agreement was little observed however, either in the spirit or the letter, by the signatory chiefs.

British efforts first took definite shape in a treaty concluded with Sultan Sa'id of Muscat in 1822,[3] which prohibited the sale of slaves to Christian nations by the sultan's subjects and, further, made punishable the buying of slaves for sale to Christians; it also empowered the British to place an agent in the sultan's dominions in East Africa to watch the trade, and to seize Omani vessels found carrying slaves to Christian countries.[4] The object of this treaty—a first definite step—was the extinction of the slave trade between East Africa and India: a wide belt within which the traffic continued to be lawful, connecting the east coast of Africa with Oman, was intentionally left, the time not being considered ripe to induce Sultan Sa'id to forbid all trade in slaves within his dominions. It was considered, and no doubt rightly, at

[1] Lieut. A. B. Kemball, *Extracts from the Records of the Residency at Bushire*. Bombay Selection, No. XXIV, 1856.

[2] Aitchison, xxxviii. [3] *Idem*, liii.

[4] The limit of the line of search extended from Cape Delgado in Africa, through a point sixty miles east of Socotra, to Diu in India.

this stage, that the Muhammadan populations affected—by whose religion domestic slavery was lawful and whose convenience had come by long custom to depend on a regular supply of slaves—would be exasperated by too drastic a change, and, further, that no good result was to be anticipated, for doubtless the trade would merely be deflected to Persian or Turkish territory, or to that of independent states such as Qatif, with whom no agreement to restrain the traffic had as yet been formed.

In 1838–9 Britain, in continuation of her efforts, obtained the consent of the Sultan of Muscat to amplification of the treaty of 1822.[1] The principal new provisions authorized the detention and search, by British cruisers, of Omani vessels found beyond the restrictive line and suspected of being engaged in the slave trade; and the confiscation of such vessels, if proved to be carrying slaves intended for sale beyond the restrictive line.[2] This agreement was apparently made in connexion with fresh agreements with the Trucial chiefs, which will be noted below.

In 1845 further progress was made by another agreement,[3] whereby the sultan undertook to prohibit, under the severest penalties, the export of slaves from his African dominions; to prohibit the importation of slaves from any part of Africa into his possessions in Asia; and to use his utmost influence with all the chiefs of Arabia, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf to prevent the introduction of slaves from Africa, into their respective territories. By this agreement, ships of the Royal Navy and East India Company, Bombay Marine, were authorized to seize and confiscate Omani vessels so engaged. Similar terms were come to with Sohar, which at that time formed a small principality, independent of Muscat. Provision for giving effect to the agreement was made by Act of Parliament,[4] which authorized British officers to take action in accordance therewith.[5]

All the above agreements were made with Sultan Sa'id, as

[1] Aitchison, lv.

[2] The sale of Somalis as slaves was also declared to be punishable as piracy, Somalis being regarded by Muhammadan jurists as *hurr*, or free, and as belonging to an unenslavable race. The restrictive area was also reduced, the line being made to pass from Cape Delgado two degrees seaward of Socotra to Puzim on the Makran coast; by this change, the Sultan's ports of Gwadar and Chahbar were closed to the slave trade.

[3] Aitchison, lvi.

[4] Act 11 & 12 Vic., Cap. CXXVIII, 15th Sept. 1848.

[5] In 1867, by an Order in Council of the Sultan, the British Consul there was empowered to try any British subject accused of being engaged in, or accessory to, the purchase or sale of slaves.

ruler over both Muscat and Zanzibar, but after his death, in 1856, Muscat and Zanzibar became separate sultanates; as the agreement of 1845 had become almost a dead letter, especially at Zanzibar, new treaties were arranged in 1873 with the two sultans individually, at the instance of Sir Bartle Frere. By this instrument, the importation of slaves into the Sultan of Muscat's territories was absolutely interdicted; vessels engaged in carrying slaves were declared to be liable to confiscation by British officers and courts; the closing of all public markets for slaves in his dominions was promised; the sultan undertook to protect all liberated slaves to the utmost of his power; and the British Government engaged that natives of Indian States under British protection should be prohibited from acquiring fresh slaves and, after a certain date to be fixed, from possessing any. But the most important provision was one to the effect that all persons thereafter entering the sultan's dominions should be free. The Sultan of Zanzibar, on his part, signed a treaty for the complete abolition of the slave trade within his dominions.[1]

We now turn to Trucial Oman. Engagements in a similar spirit to those with the Sultan of Muscat were entered into with the various shaikhs in 1838–9 [2] and 1847.[3] By the latter agreement, the five Trucial shaikhs engaged themselves to prohibit the exportation of slaves from any place whatever on board vessels belonging to them and their subjects, and consented to detention and search and—in case of guilt—to confiscation of the vessel. In 1856 the objects of this agreement were strengthened by a fresh engagement secured from the Trucial shaikhs individually,[4] by which each bound himself to seize and deliver up to the British any slaves brought into his territory or into places subject to his authority. In 1873 there were further assurances of adherence to existing treaties by certain of the Trucial shaikhs.[5]

The shaikh of Bahrain subscribed to the agreements accepted by the Trucial shaikhs, and in addition, in 1861, made an important agreement to abstain from slavery and other unlawful practices at sea in consideration of protection to be afforded him by the British Government.[6]

[1] Aitchison, lxiii. Previous to this, slaves of Zanzibar were not allowed to pass by water within the sultan's dominions between 1st January and 1st May. There was therefore a close season of four months, but during the remaining eight the trade flowed apace. [2] Aitchison, xxxix and xl. [3] *Idem*, xli.

[4] *Idem*, xxx. [5] Sharja and Abu Dhabi. Aitchison, xlvii and xlviii.

[6] No agreements on the subject of the slave trade were obtained from the chiefs of Qatar, Hasa, or Kuwait.

As to Persia. In deference to representations on the part of the British Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, the Shah, in an autograph note dated 1848,[1] agreed to prohibit the importation (and exportation) of negroes into Persia by sea; there was, however, no intention to interfere with the traffic by land. To make this order effective, a Convention,[2] to remain in force for eleven years, was concluded in 1851 between the Persian and British Governments. It provided that British warships should be at liberty to search Persian merchant vessels for African slaves, the Persian Government undertaking that none should be imported in government vessels. The conditions, however, were that no search should be made without the co-operation of a Persian official, who was to be carried on the British war vessel; and, if slaves were found, they were to be removed and disposed of by the British authorities, the guilty vessel being handed over to the Persian authorities. Slaves provided with special passports by the Persian authorities at Bushire, when travelling by sea, were not to be interfered with. This Convention was renewed, for a further period of ten years, on the signing of the Treaty of Peace between Britain and Persia at Paris, after the Anglo-Persian War of 1856–7, and it remained in force until superseded by a Convention concluded at Tehran in 1882.[3]

The only other Power, involved in the slave traffic in the Gulf, which remains to be considered is Turkey. With the exception of an order of the Pasha of Baghdad in 1812, that natives of India kidnapped and brought to Basra for sale as slaves should be handed over to the British agent there, no arrangements were come to with the Porte until 1847. In that year, at the instance of the British Government, a decree was promulgated by the Sultan of Turkey whereby merchant vessels under the Turkish flag were prohibited from engaging in the trade. This was confirmed by a treaty between the Porte and the British Government, concluded at Constantinople in 1880, by which the Turkish Government undertook to prohibit the importation of African slaves into any part of the Ottoman dominions, and not to allow the exportation of such, except as domestic servants accompanying their employers.[4]

Such, then, is the history of the diplomatic and juridical aspect of British efforts at the suppression of the slave trade. We may

[1] Aitchison, xv. [2] *Idem*, xvi. [3] *Idem*, xxv.

[4] See also Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, *Extracts from Records of Bushire Residency*.

now examine the manner in which the agreements, secured by the British Government for its suppression, were utilized and put into practice. In view of the varying local conditions in the Gulf, much had to be left at first to the discretion of the individual officers engaged in the operations. It was not until 1852, when, as we have seen, agreements of one kind or another had been come to with the Persian and Turkish Governments, as well as with nearly all the petty states of the Arabian coast, that the position in the Persian Gulf admitted of general action. Up to that time, much had to be left to the personal endeavour and goodwill of the chiefs involved in the agreements.

No regular or organized patrol of the Gulf and adjacent waters by British vessels was at first possible or permissible. But in 1852 the steam vessel *Tigris*, of the Indian Navy, was placed on special slave duty at the entrance to the Gulf, with orders to watch the Batina coast and other suspected localities, the aim being, if possible, to intercept vessels carrying on the illicit traffic between East Africa and Oman. The equipment of the *Tigris* proved unequal to the arduous character of her duties; and it was soon evident that willing co-operation was not to be expected of the natives of the Gulf. It was recognized that preventive measures would be more efficacious if surveillance were instituted on the African coast, whence the slaves were exported. There was a deficiency of ships, however, and the coast was long, and though some slaves were captured the results were disappointing, for between 1852 and 1855 the number of slaves liberated by the authorities in the Gulf was only 78.

As time went on, it became more and more evident to those who had to deal with the slave trade, that cruising against slavers should be conducted outside rather than within the limits of the Gulf; and that serious political difficulties in the Persian Gulf would be avoided if the traffic were checked at a distance, and prevented from reaching the Gulf. The conclusion was arrived at that slaves were chiefly landed in southern Oman. The *Falkland*, cruising in the sixties between Jask and Sohar, met with only moderate success, and slaves continued to reach the Persian coast higher up in large numbers. In the early sixties it was estimated by the Political Agent at Zanzibar that the annual exportation northward from East Africa was as high as 10,000; in other words, preventive action had not yet been made effective, and in 1862 the trade still flourished with almost unabated vigour.

In the seventies somewhat greater success attended the efforts

of H.M.S. *Magpie* and *Vulture*, sent to cruise off Ras al Hadd. The latter captured a large dhow in which were 169 slaves, mostly women and children; the *nakhuda* of the vessel was imprisoned by the Sultan of Muscat and the vessel destroyed. At this stage, all the chiefs having treaties with Great Britain were reminded of their obligations, and other steps were taken for combating the trade. From a description in the *Times of India*[1] of a slave vessel captured by the *Vulture*, the methods of the exporters appear to have been characterized by great barbarity.

'The number of slaves it was impossible at the time to estimate; so crowded on deck, and in the hold below was the dhow, that it seemed, but for the aspect of misery, a very nest of ants. The hold, from which an intolerable stench proceeded, was several inches deep in the foulest bilge-water and refuse. Down below, there were numbers of children and wretched beings in the most loathsome stages of small-pox and scrofula of every description. A more disgusting and degrading spectacle of humanity could not be seen, while the foulness of the dhow was such that the sailors could hardly endure it. When the slaves were transferred to the *Vulture* the poor wretched creatures were so dreadfully emaciated and weak, that many had to be carried on board and lifted for every movement. How it was that so many survived such hardships was a source of wonder to all. . . . But perhaps the most atrocious piece of cruelty of the Arabs was heard afterwards from the slaves themselves; viz. that at the first discovery of small-pox among them by the Arabs, all the affected slaves were at once thrown overboard, and this was continued day by day until, they said, forty had perished in this manner.'

In 1871 a Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Slave Trade was appointed. As a result, Sir Bartle Frere was sent in 1873 on a mission to Zanzibar, and was able to arrange the treaty cited above with the sultan. Thereupon, H.M.S. *London* was stationed at the fountain-head of the human stream, for the purpose of intercepting the exportation of slaves from the East African coast. The *London* remained at Zanzibar for nearly ten years and, during that period, what may not inaptly be termed the 'wholesale traffic' was, for the time being, practically suppressed. But slaves still arrived in the Persian Gulf in small lots, and dealers had begun (about 1875) to conceal their operations by use of the French flag (see pp. 241 f.), which secured them against search by British vessels. Though operations continued on a small scale, there seemed hope that the trade would shortly die a natural death. In the early eighties, however, there was a recrudescence, attributed partly

[1] October 1872.

to the withdrawal of the *London* from Zanzibar, but doubtless also to a severe famine in the interior of Africa which brought down the price of slaves and increased the supply, and to loss of British prestige in consequence of reverses in the Sudan.

Operations by patrolling cruisers on a more extensive scale were then undertaken, and greater vigilance exercised. But in spite of systematic cruising, the search of vessels, and occasional captures of slavers, the trade in some unaccountable manner was still active, and at times even seemed to be on the increase. The inhabitants of the Batina appeared to be the most deeply implicated, and Sur, near Ras al Hadd, was one of the chief centres. The use of the French flag by slave traders to protect their vessels from seizure had, in the nineties, become common among the subjects of the Sultan of Muscat and the people of Sur, and slave cargoes began to reach Basra under French colours, though the use of the flag was often unauthorized and fraudulent. Fear of the French Government deterred Sultan Turki, now ruling in Muscat, from taking action, though he showed throughout a praiseworthy disposition to support the anti-slavery policy of the British Government.

Inquiry showed that African slaves were brought to Sur in vessels belonging to that port, most of which flew French colours. The slaves were ordinarily landed at Sur itself, but the owners of vessels had accomplices at Ras al Hadd and other places, and, when British cruisers appeared, they were accustomed to receive timely warning and landed their human cargoes at Jumaila or Lashkhara, small places near by, whence the slaves were marched overland in gangs to their destination, usually Sur. At this time, the number imported here, annually, was estimated at three hundred, whence they were again distributed, usually by land, into the Trucial Oman and Bahrain among other places. Sur quickly attained a disreputable prominence in the traffic, and it became increasingly clear that the only way to put an end to it was to break up the Sur depot; but the chief obstacle to such a step was the attitude of France in regard to her flag, and the attitude taken up by the local representatives of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Seizures by commanders of British warships continued, but political difficulties arose owing to the extent to which the protection of the French flag was being abused. For three years, from 1896, in consequence, slave cruising by British men-of-war in Oman waters was virtually discontinued, though it was maintained in other parts of the Gulf.

Importations at Sur, in particular, then increased. The Political Agent at Muscat[1] ascertained that over 1,000 African slaves had been imported at Sur during 1900 and 1901, and in 1902 the trade was reported to be in ' a flourishing condition '. Suppression was hampered as long as the French flag question remained unsettled.

At this juncture sudden retribution overtook the slave dealers of Oman in an unexpected quarter, nearly 3,000 miles distant from their homes. Information reached the Portuguese Governor of Mozambique that a flotilla of Arab vessels of suspicious appearance was anchored in the small inlet of Samuco, one hundred miles to the north. It was discovered that a body of Omani Arabs had virtually established an armed occupation of the district and, with the connivance of the Shaikh of Samuco, were actively engaged in the wholesale purchase of slaves. A Portuguese expedition attacked the camp and took all the Omani vessels, to the number of twelve, including some under the French flag. In the camp some 725 slaves were found. After trial, the Arab survivors were sentenced to twenty-five years' deportation to the Portuguese province of Angola. The prisoners were shown to be either natives of Sur or of Oman, or Arabs of the Bani bu Ali and Jannaba tribes. The Portuguese seizures had a very salutary effect on the Sur dealers and on slave-trading activities in the Gulf in general, but the incident seemed to give incontrovertible proof that slave-running still flourished in an organized form on a large scale. A further check to the traffic arose in 1905, following the award by the Hague Tribunal (favourable to the British) in regard to the use of the French flag in Oman (see p. 243), in consequence of which the local French representative was compelled to exercise a closer supervision over native masters entitled to use the French colours.

Nothing has been said as yet regarding the traffic on the Persian side of the Gulf—the coast of Fars and Makran. Though activities were not as pronounced as on the Arabian coast, sporadic cases of slave-running occurred, most of them at Lingeh, and the chief perpetrators were again the traders of Sur. The Persian authorities, notably at Shiraz, exerted the utmost ingenuity to avoid carrying out the stipulations of the conventions of 1851 and 1882, and lent but little effective aid to the British. On the Makran coast the trade was an export one: in the hinterland of

[1] Captain (now Sir) P. Z. Cox.

Jask, agents were active in seizing helpless Baluchis and selling them to merchants from the Oman coast, shipping them from the obscure coastal towns of Galag and Sadaich. That the trade on the Persian coast did exist was evident from the fact that, in 1904–5, of ninety-five slaves manumitted at Muscat, no less than sixty were Persians or Baluchis who had been exported from Makran to the Batina coast of Oman. The frequent ingress of fugitive slaves into the Oman dependency of Gwadar, on the Makran coast, was further evidence of its existence. Runaway slaves also occasionally took refuge in the British telegraph station at Jask.

Domestic slavery. The above remarks have exclusive reference to the exterior slave traffic of the Persian Gulf, as distinct from the interior domestic slavery. Among the rulers and inhabitants of the Arab coast of the Gulf there is a strong vested interest in favour of a practice for which the amplest sanction exists in the Koran. For these reasons, and on account of the difficulty, not to say unwisdom, of interfering drastically with long-established custom in the internal affairs of independent or quasi-independent states, the British Government has uniformly abstained from active interference with domestic slavery in Gulf waters.

To do so would not only be contrary to our treaties, but it would also involve a degree of interference with vested religious, social, and economic interests which would almost certainly have far-reaching repercussions in the political sphere. Yet it must be confessed that at no point is British policy in the Persian Gulf more open to criticism: the problem awaits solution. Until domestic slavery is abolished on the Trucial Coast no serious improvement in economic or cultural conditions is possible. It is an evil to which British officials have mercifully, in virtue of their official limitations, become almost blind. A revolution in public opinion is necessary: and it may eventually come, as it did in the West Indies 120 years or so ago, from the steady influence exercised by missionary bodies, whose beneficent and selfless activities in the Persian Gulf have affected the trend of local public opinion, in this and other matters, far more than is apparent on the surface.

In 1890, by decree of the Sultan of Zanzibar, an end was put to the traffic in domestic slaves within his dominions; various classes of domestic slaves were liberated immediately, and the way was made easy for the remainder to obtain their freedom.

A proposal to press the Sultan of Muscat and the shaikhs of Bahrain and Trucial Oman to adopt a similar measure was found to be impracticable, owing to the dissimilarity of the internal conditions of these various states. So the Government of India eventually declared that it was their object, 'now, as always, to discourage slavery under any terms, and to move steadily in the direction of its opposition,' but considered that a mistake would be made if, by precipitate or sentimental action, a slavery question were gratuitously raised in the Persian Gulf.

Craft. It will be interesting to examine the type of native craft used in the slave traffic, and no better description can be found than that of the commander of H.M.S. *Dryad*,[1] in operations against the slavers in 1873; and the difficulties confronting those whose duty it was to combat the practice will be the better appreciated. He says:

'The vessels which conduct the slave trade, and all other trade between Oman and Zanzibar, are of different sizes and of two patterns. In the navy both were called *dhows*. In common language in India, and in official documents, both are as often called *bugles* or *buggalows*. The smallest of these dhows are mere boats: the largest I have ever seen did not appear to be over 350 tons burthen.

'If a pear be sharpened at the thin end, and then cut in half longitudinally, two models will have been made resembling in all essential respects the ordinary slave dhow. From their form, it is evident the bow must sink deeply in the water whilst the stern floats lightly upon it. In this they differ from the universal practice of European shipbuilding, but it has yet to be proved that they are in principle, wrongly constructed.

'They are seldom wholly decked, and by far the greater number are not decked at all. . . . Commonly, especially in the lighter class of dhows, a light superstructure occasionally of great size, forming a poop, is added at the stern, and serves as a dwelling for the captain or owner, perhaps for his wives, family, and personal attendants, the upper class of passenger, if he has any, and sometimes for the whole crew.

'The dhows often carry more than one mast: this is a heavy rough spar, tapering towards its head, and generally leaning considerably towards the bow of the vessel. . . . If there is a second mast, it is a smaller copy—usually a much smaller copy—of the other, and is placed near the stern. The sails of these vessels are neither the complete "lateen" or triangular sail, of the Mediterranean and India; nor the "long" sail of the English Channel, but they partake of the nature of both. In shape, the sail is a right-angled triangle with a parallelogram below at the base. The spread of canvas in the dhow's sail appears to us excessive for her size, and there is no arrange-

[1] Colomb, Captain, R.N.

ment for reefing in bad weather: but every sea-going dhow carries two yards and two sails, one large, as described, for daylight and fine weather, the other small, for night and foul weather.

'These vessels are enormously swift: they would tax the powers of our fastest yachts in light winds; the most speedy man-of-war, under steam and sail, has her hands full when she gives chase to them in a breeze. I have doubted of success, when rushing after them at ten and a half miles an hour.

'The dhow is generally leaky. I have never heard an estimate of the numbers which go down at sea, but if a very large proportion of those which sail on it do not sink, their general proximity to the shore and not the tightness of the hull must save them. To tow them at any speed would generally pull them to pieces.... Every dhow I have seen, whether a lawful or unlawful trader, carries arms. Seldom or never cannon, but invariably muskets, swords, spears and shields. . . . Water is carried in large square wooden tanks, holding perhaps 100 to 150 gallons.'

As to the treatment of the slaves during the voyage, it does not appear that it was invariably bad, though, as already shown above, there are instances of the most flagrant cruelty. Captain Colomb says:

'Except that they are more crowded, I have not perceived that the condition of the slave, in transit across the Arabian Sea, is very different from that of his master. The Englishman would probably succumb to the privations of the journey, but I have often heard it said on the spot, that no one should talk of the cruelty of the Arab to his slaves on the northern voyage, unless they were acquainted with the conditions under which he and his family performed the voyage of business or pleasure from Arabia to Zanzibar. But on the other hand, the crowding in so small a space is a crying evil. I shall elsewhere have occasion to point out that we must not suppose crowding, by itself, affects the negro as it does a European, or indeed an Asiatic. We shall meet with at least one cargo of slaves, plump, well-favoured, and not unhappy, with the worst of their journey to Arabia over. But if disease, want and crowding come together, then, God help the wretched items in that crowd. Yet again, I have to say that I could not choose off-hand whether I would rather spend a fortnight in the conditions of a slave in an Arab dhow not over-crowded, or the condition of a peasant in some cabins I have seen in the south of Ireland, whose masters were said to possess a considerable balance at their bankers. . . . I speak of what I have seen, and judge to be the average condition of things.'

On this aspect of the slave trade, the Resident in the Persian Gulf wrote, in 1844: 'The treatment of the African slaves is at no time either severe or cruel. During the sea voyage they are not bound, or kept under particular restraint. Rice, dates and fish, in sufficient quantities form their food, and a coarse cloth round the middle of the body constitutes their only clothing.

XIV. A 'baghalah' in the Shatt al Arab

From a drawing by S. H. Balfour

From the moment of their purchase at their eventual destination, however, their condition is materially improved and, considered in the light of valuable property, liable to loss from sickness or death, they are comfortably provided for, and amply fed by their masters. They, in return, work hard, willingly and well, and are apparently happy and contented.' [1]

The task of the slave chaser, though seemingly simple, was by no means easy in practice. In the early days, the powers conferred upon officers of His Majesty's ships engaged in the suppression of the trade seemed ample, but were often difficult of application. 'You will show', so ran the ordinary instructions, 'the utmost diligence in the suppression of the slave trade; at the same time, you will be careful to observe moderation in the exercise of the powers with which you are entrusted.' The vessels 'subject to authority and examination' were those belonging to any state with which Great Britain had a treaty for the suppression of the slave trade; but only within the limits prescribed by such treaty, or, if no limits were prescribed, when found in waters not being 'territorial waters'. The interpretation of the latter term was one of exceptional difficulty where a stretch of coast running to several thousands of miles, parcelled out among a number of potentates of very varying authority and status, was involved.

The instructions to officers relative to the detention of vessels were very detailed. 'If, in the course of your search,' they ran, 'you are satisfied that the vessel is engaged or equipped for the slave trade, and that she is subject to your authority, you will proceed to detain her. You will be justified in concluding that a vessel is engaged in the slave trade: (*a*) if you find slaves on board; or (*b*) if you find in her outfit any of the equipments hereinafter mentioned.' [2]

A vessel being detained by the naval officer on grounds according with these instructions, the next point for his decision was what should be done with her? The instructions gave the answer, and, theoretically, were easy of application: 'After you have detained the vessel, you will, with as little delay as possible, forward her to the proper port of adjudication.' These 'proper

[1] Bombay Selections, No. XXIV, p. 635.

[2] To wit: 'Hatches with open gratings instead of close hatches; divisions or bulk-heads, in the hold or on deck, in greater number than are necessary for vessels engaged in lawful trade; spare planks for laying down as a slave deck; shackles, bolts or handcuffs,' &c.

ports ', for the northern trade of the Indian Ocean, were Zanzibar, Aden, Bombay, and Muscat. Easier said than done, for these ports were, on an average, more than one thousand miles apart, so that prizes often had to be sent hundreds of miles to be condemned! The question arose, how were they to be got over this ground? Captain Colomb says:

'I have described the vessels, the winds and currents; no English naval officer would willingly trust a prize crew on board a dhow for a voyage of fifty miles, and certainly not for several hundred. If they are to be taken to a prize court, it must be in tow of a ship. Yet supposing it possible to tow them any distance, which they could rarely bear, how can the ship abandon her station, for the sake of one capture, and neglect the suppression of the trade, while she is away at the prize court?'

In the case of an unseaworthy vessel, the instructions permitted her destruction, after a formal survey had been made of her and certificates drawn up, a copy of which was to be given to the master.

What was the practical and necessary result of these difficult conditions? It was that scuttling became the rule. 'Every detained vessel,' says Captain Colomb, 'unless the capture be made almost within sight of the port of adjudication, "appears to be unfit to proceed" there, is formally surveyed, formally reported unfit, and very informally scuttled or burnt. In the nature of things, this must be so. The captain of the ship is judge, jury and executioner, and in these capacities he must exercise his functions.' This procedure, however, had to be modified in the light of later official instructions, which ran:

'My Lords cannot, however, too strongly insist that such destruction of a vessel is only to be resorted to as an extreme measure. Nothing will excuse the officer in not sending the vessel to a court of adjudication except facts showing satisfactorily that doing so would have involved serious danger to the lives of the prize crew.'

In the early days, if, after capture, the slavers wished to proceed about their business and let judgement go by default in the prize-court, the officer did not see how, having destroyed the dhow, he could keep the crew for months on board as prisoners, until, in fact, he reached a port of adjudication. Hence there grew up a custom of allowing the crews to follow their own wishes, and be landed, transhipped to other dhows, or carried into port in other ships. Later instructions from head-quarters forbade even this practice, in these terms:

'Nothing short of necessity will justify any officer in landing any such

persons on the coast at random, near the place of capture, or in taking them to any port other than the port of adjudication.' It was further insisted that ' the purpose of taking the captured vessel to the proper port of adjudication, is not to procure, as a matter of form, a decree of condemnation, but to obtain a full and fair trial of the case '.

So despite the difficulties and drawbacks, crews and captured slaves—when the chaser had reached its complement—were taken to whichever port was nearest the scene of operations. It became the practice for vessels to ' drive ' as far as possible in the direction of one or other of the ports of adjudication—having due regard to coal supply and accommodation for captured slaves. Such a drive of five of Her Majesty's ships in 1870, acting in concert, is graphically described by Captain Colomb as follows:

' The southernmost ship had met two full slavers off Ras Aswad on the African Coast, who had only asked " which side they were to come " for discharging their cargoes, amounting to 420 slaves. The ship at Ras Hafun had picked up a dhow with 236. The ship at Makalla had captured three dhows with 57 slaves. The ship further east, one dhow with 79, and lastly, we ourselves had captured three dhows, had run on shore and destroyed two, and had rescued 175 slaves. The total was heavy and showed a well-spread web. Thirteen dhows destroyed and 967 slaves released in the space of less than one month, was at least the vigorous carrying out of the British policy of forcibly destroying a condemned trade. Each ship's slaves were transferred, immediately on arrival, to the civil authorities at Aden, who transported them to an island in the harbour, known by the name of Slave Island.' [1]

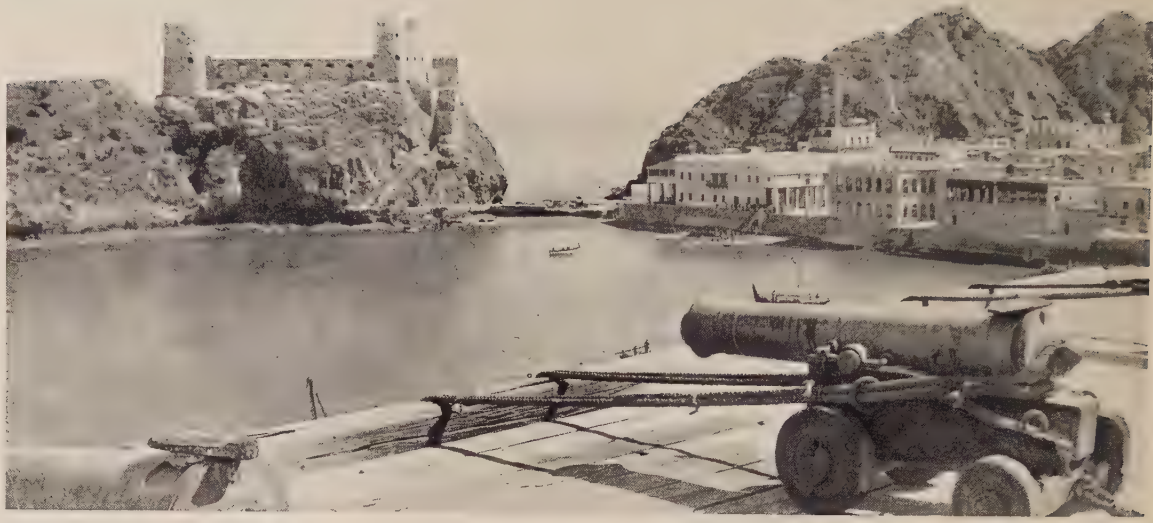
Occasionally cargoes of rescued slaves were dispatched in a man-of-war to Bombay, but only when the pressure at Aden became too great. Nevertheless, Sir Bartle Frere speaks of the disposal of rescued slaves at Bombay as a great trouble. When they were few, and chiefly adults, there was not much difficulty in dealing with them; but when they increased in numbers ' there were some very painful cases '. As the children were the most difficult to deal with in the way of disposal, the missionaries

[1] According to the evidence of the Hon. C. Vivian before the Select Committee of 1871, in answer to the question as to how the slaves were finally disposed of: ' they go in most cases to Aden, where there is very bad accommodation for them; they are imprisoned on a small island there, till they can be sent on to Bombay; some of them are taken to Mauritius and some to Seychelles, another of our colonies. In those places the same regulations which apply to free labourers apply to them, and they are apprenticed for a certain number of years, and after that time, if they can get employment or show that they are capable of taking care of themselves, they are let go.'

were consulted, and there grew up at Sharanpur, some ninety miles north-east of Bombay, a branch of the Church Missionary establishment, under the name of the ' African Asylum ', where these children were received.

It was the custom, up to 1889, to deport all captured or liberated slaves—unless they were willing to remain in the Persian Gulf—ultimately to Bombay. At length, the authorities there animadverted on the constant increase of this often excitable and turbulent element in the population under their control. After various efforts to discover another outlet, it was at length proposed that freed slaves should be sent instead to East Africa. The authorities at Zanzibar having approved, and having held out prospects of employment for them in the plantations of the sultan, emancipated slaves in the Gulf region have ever since been sent there.

From what has been said, it will be abundantly evident that Britain's self-imposed task to suppress the traffic in slaves in Persian Gulf waters was no light one. As time went on, the methods adopted for putting an end to the practice became more effective; but the task is not complete even yet. Isolated acts of piracy occur every year, and there is still probably a small surreptitious traffic in slaves. These sporadic cases are usually detected and swiftly punished, and on the whole our work stands good. If our efforts to keep the Gulf free from the curse of slavery have fallen short of the success that we hoped for, it has not been through lack of effort and vigilance, either in earlier days or in more recent times.



XV. VIEW OF MUSCAT HARBOUR

XV

THE GROWTH OF THE ARAB PRINCIPALITIES

'I have shown the Persian Government along its northern shores exercising a more vigorous and undisputed sovereignty than at any period since the reign of Shah Abbas; upon its southern coast the Turks endeavouring to extend a precarious influence over Arabia; and small Arab states, retaining either wholly or only in part their original independence; while between all parties intervenes the sworded figure of Great Britain, with firm and just hand holding the scales. It is no exaggeration to say that the lives and properties of hundreds of thousands of human beings are secured by this British Protectorate of the Persian Gulf, and that were it either withdrawn or destroyed both sea and shores would relapse into the anarchical chaos from which they have so laboriously been reclaimed.'

LORD CURZON, *Persia and the Persian Question.*

WE now reach a period in the history of the Gulf when, during the course of the nineteenth century, on the Arabian side, a number of states or principalities gradually assumed a more or less definite form as separate political entities, to be seriously reckoned with in considering Persian Gulf affairs. These we shall now consider in turn.

Muscat. Up to this time Muscat formed, nominally at least, an integral part of the wider dominions of the Imam of Oman. In 1793 Sultan bin Ahmed revolted against his uncle, Sayyid Hamad, the nominal Imam, and having made himself master of the forts at Muscat, Matra, Barka, and other posts along the coast, set up an independent rule under the title of Sayyid Sultan. This event marked the beginning of separate dealings on the part of the Bombay Government with the Sultan of Muscat, which developed as time went on. British commercial interests had hitherto been represented at Muscat by a native broker only, negotiations for the establishment there of a factory having failed, as we have seen (p. 189).

In 1798 a Persian of influence, Mehdi Ali Khan, was selected by the Bombay Government for appointment as Resident at Bushire. In this capacity he was instructed, among other things, to ascertain at Muscat the real disposition of Sayyid Sultan towards the French, and to endeavour to dissuade him from assisting them; further, he was to report on the trustworthiness of the Company's native agent, who had come under suspicion. He was further instructed to obtain, if possible, a concession for the establishment of a British factory at Muscat; and to promise, if

the sultan undertook to exclude the French from Oman, that a surgeon should be sent from India for his personal service, as he desired.

In due course, an agreement was signed in 1798,[1] whereby Sayyid Sultan bound himself always to take the side, in international matters, of the British Government; to deny a commercial or other foothold in his dominions to the French and Dutch nations so long as a state of war existed; to dismiss from his service and expel any employee of French nationality; to exclude French vessels, which then made Muscat a base of privateering operations; in case of hostility ensuing between English and French ships, to actively assist the former; and, finally, to permit the British to establish, should they so wish, a fortified factory and garrison at Bandar Abbas, which the sultan then held on lease from Persia. But Sayyid Sultan firmly refused to permit a British factory at Muscat, on the ground that such a concession would involve him in war with the French and Dutch, and though he at first agreed to receive an English Political Agent at Muscat, he subsequently withdrew consent.

At the end of 1799 Captain (afterwards Sir) John Malcolm was sent by the Government of India on his first political mission to the Persian court, with instructions 'to adjust, while at Muscat, any points relating to our interests at that place'; and with him was a surgeon. When Malcolm arrived at Muscat the sultan was absent on a cruise, but in January 1800 he found him on board his ship, anchored between Qishm and Hanjam. Sayyid Sultan, 'after a short but explicit conversation', set his seal to a new agreement,[2] which confirmed that of 1798, and provided further for the acceptance of a British Political Agent at Muscat,[3] so that misunderstandings should not arise. Having achieved this, Malcolm proceeded to Bushire and Tehran, and Surgeon Bogle, who meanwhile had established himself in the sultan's confidence, then assumed the position of first British Political Agent at Muscat.

In September 1803 a French mission, under M. de Cavaignac, arrived, and became aware, for the first time, of the existence of the British agreements of 1798 and 1800. The sultan, while willing to discuss purely commercial matters, informed the French mission that on account of the agreements with the British he could

[1] Aitchison, li.

[2] *Idem*, lii.

[3] On account of the unhealthiness of the climate of Muscat for Europeans, after 1809 British interests were administered from Bushire; but after 1830 the political officer again resided at Muscat, or in Zanzibar.

not accept a French representative at Muscat or even entertain proposals thereon. The French mission accordingly withdrew. The sultan's scrupulous regard for his obligations was doubtless due to the importance to Muscat of the Indian trade, rather than to any personal preference on his part for Englishmen over Frenchmen; and maybe it had been hinted more than once, that should he throw in his lot with the French, the British Government would have no alternative but to place his territory under a commercial blockade from the side of India.

A certain strain was put upon the Malcolm agreement at times owing to occasional acts of piracy on the part of the sultan's vessels, even on British ships, which he was somewhat slow to suppress; but, generally speaking, it was loyally observed. Sayyid Sultan was unfortunately killed in 1804 by a shot through the head from a musket ball, on board one of his vessels, in an encounter with the Jawasmi, when returning from a cruise in the Persian Gulf in search of pirates.[1] He was succeeded, after some opposition and disorder, by his nephew Badr, who had behind him the support of the Wahabis; but Badr was assassinated in 1807, and the power passed into the hands of a usurper, Sayyid Sa'id, a man remarkable alike for ability and energy, who controlled the affairs of Muscat for nearly half a century, and greatly extended its territory and influence both along the coast and in the interior.[2]

The early part of Sa'id's rule was occupied in struggles against the Wahabis, generally in co-operation with the British (as described in an earlier chapter), and later he had to oppose Egyptian machinations, again with British support. He spent the last half of his reign mostly in his East African possessions at Zanzibar, rather to the neglect of his Arabian dominions. Indeed, but for the prompt assistance of the Bombay Government, who sent ships of war to Muscat and intervened between the sultan and his turbulent subjects, the reign of Sa'id would have come to an untimely end in 1829, when he had gone to Zanzibar to suppress a rising.

[1] Maurizi, p. 2.

[2] For the details of the life of Sayyid Sa'id, see Maurizi. In the preface to his book he says: 'I first arrived at Muscat in 1809; and Seyd Said immediately appointed me his physician, with a considerable salary. Besides attending on the royal person, my private practice was very extensive; it had always been my custom to collect memoranda in every country through which I passed, and this intercourse with the principal inhabitants of the city, afforded unusual opportunities of acquiring information not merely about the dominions of the Sultan,' &c.

Early in his reign, Sayyid Sa'id showed a preference for the French, but after the capture of Mauritius in 1810 his political sagacity prompted him to seek a good understanding with the English. The assistance against the Wahabis, which he received on several occasions, disposed him to agree to further treaties with the British, of far-reaching importance. Thus, in 1822 and 1845, as we have seen, he set his seal to treaties for the suppression of the slave trade;[1] in 1839 to a Treaty of Commerce,[2] which confirmed also the provisions of the treaty of 1822 regarding the slave traffic; and in 1846 to a Customs agreement.[3] By the latter, the dues on cargo for transhipment was fixed in general at 5 per cent., while cargoes, the property of the British Government, were exempted from duty altogether.

The friendly disposition of Sa'id to the English was evinced by his gift of the Kuria Muria Islands, situated off the south coast of Arabia, to the British Crown in 1854. The French had made several efforts to obtain these islands, which at the time were valuable on account of the guano with which they were covered.[4] In 1856 Sayyid Sa'id died, and two sons, Thuwaini and Majid, succeeded, after some dispute, to his divided dominions—the former to the rule of Muscat and the latter to Zanzibar. Agreement to this arrangement was brought about between the two parties in 1861 by the friendly intervention of Britain and the award of Lord Canning in Council, whereby Zanzibar and Muscat were separated, and an annual subsidy made payable by the former to the latter.[5] On the separation of the territories, the

[1] Aitchison, liii and lvi.

[2] *Idem*, liv. A Treaty of Commerce, in similar terms, was also come to with the United States in 1843 and, in 1844, with France—the latter after having first received the approval of the British Government. The privileges conferred by this treaty on French citizens and protected subjects entailed very troublesome political consequences, as will be seen, when the question of the suppression of the Arms Traffic arose.

[3] *Idem*, lvi.

[4] An earlier act of courtesy on the part of Sayyid Sa'id was the sending of a mission to England, to congratulate Queen Victoria on her accession.

[5] By the terms of the Canning Award: 'The annual payment of 40,000 crowns is not to be understood as a recognition of the dependence of Zanzibar upon Muscat; neither is it to be considered as merely personal between Your Highness and your brother Syud. It is to extend to your respective successors, and is to be held to be a final and permanent arrangement, compensating the ruler of Muscat for the abandonment of all claims upon Zanzibar, and adjusting the inequality between the two inheritances derived from your father, His late Highness Syud Saeed, the venerated friend of the British Government, which two inheritances are to be henceforward distinct and separate.' Aitchison, lix.

Government of Bombay decided that each of the rulers should in future be styled 'Sultan', the title by which, from this date onwards, the ruler of Muscat will be known to us.[1] In 1861 a British Political Officer again took up residence at Muscat.

The most important treaty agreement which was come to during Sultan Thuwaini's reign was one in which he was not a party. In March 1862 Great Britain and France subscribed to a Declaration,[2] or reciprocal agreement, respecting the independence of the sultanates of Muscat and Zanzibar. 'The Contracting powers,' the treaty ran, 'taking into consideration the importance and independence of His Highness the Sultan of Muscat and of His Highness the Sultan of Zanzibar, have thought it right to engage reciprocally to respect the independence of these Sovereigns.' This compact was pregnant with unforeseen consequences, of which we became fully conscious at the close of the nineteenth century.

In 1864 and the following year or so, the Wahabis renewed their aggressions on the district of Oman, the *casus belli* being, ostensibly, a demand on their part for an increase in the annual customary *zakat*, or tribute. They made a serious raid on Sur and inflicted much damage which fell largely upon Hindu traders who were British Indian subjects, which called for British intervention. Direct action, taken at the advice and under the guidance of the British Resident,[3] at Qatif and Baraimi, the key positions of the Wahabis in Oman, brought about a settlement, and assurance was given by the amir of the Wahabis that he would not in future attack Arab tribes who were in alliance with the British, especially those of Oman, provided the tribute[4] was punctually paid. From this time, acts of Wahabi aggression on the principalities of the Arabian shores of the Persian Gulf became less and less frequent and effective.

The rule of Sultan Thuwaini is marked by yet another important agreement, concluded in 1864, whereby 'my faithful ally, the British Government, is at liberty to construct one or more lines of telegraphic communication anywhere within the territories appertaining to the State of Muscat, and in any territories which

[1] See Badger, pp. 378 ff.

[2] It arose largely out of Zanzibar affairs, and was entered into by the Home Government without reference to the Government of India, which latter did not, in fact, know of its existence till some ten years later. Aitchison.

[3] Colonel (afterwards Sir) Lewis Pelly.

[4] Aitchison, lxi. The treaty was signed on behalf of the British by Colonel Pelly.

I may hold in lease from the Shah of Persia '.[1] This agreement was supplemented in 1865 by a convention for the extension of the electric telegraph through the dominions subject to His Highness in Arabia and Makran. (See further, Chapter XVI.) Sultan Thuwaini was assassinated by his son at Sohar in 1866, little regretted, it seems, alike by the Europeans with whom he came into contact or by the members of his own family.

Two short reigns followed, during which few events having any important bearing upon the general affairs of the Gulf occurred. There were, as usual, domestic dissensions and internal rebellion, culminating in 1871, when the power was seized by Turki, a son of Sayyid Sa'id, who had become master of Muscat and the coast towns of Matra and Sur, and held besides a number of fortified positions in the interior. He was recognized as ruler by the British in the same year. The early years of Turki's rule were marked by the quarrels of the rival religious factions, Hinawi and Ghafiri,[2] and by attacks by rebels of the interior on Muscat, Matra, and other coast towns. These political disturbances called for British intervention, on account of losses sustained by British subjects; we did not, however, again interfere in Oman affairs beyond giving, in 1886, an undertaking to uphold the sultan in repelling unprovoked aggression.

In 1873 Turki signed, with Sir Bartle Frere, a treaty[3] of great value, for the effectual suppression of the slave trade, an act which gave him a high place in the good graces of the British authorities, whereas the Sultan of Zanzibar at first declined to treat on the question. Turki made sincere efforts, in co-operation with the British, to enforce the treaty, but his attitude tended to make him unpopular with certain sections of his subjects. His loyalty in this particular respect was a principal reason of the great personal regard in which he was held by all British Political Officers with whom he came in contact.[4]

An important question of status was settled in 1873 by the sultan's unqualified acceptance of the principle that the subjects of Indian states resident in the sultanate were, equally with British subjects, amenable to British consular jurisdiction. The Muscat agency was provided with a military guard, for the first

[1] Aitchison, lxii.

[2] For a full account of these factions, see Badger.

[3] See p. 218.

[4] Badger. Among the numerous marks of British favour were his investment with the G.C.S.I. in 1886, and the gift of two batteries of guns for the defence of his Muscat forts.

time, in 1880. The sultan's personal prestige favoured the freer movement of the Political Agent in the interior, who, in consequence, was able to make frequent excursions into these hitherto little-known regions—to Baraimi, to Jabal Akhdhar, and to Wadi Tayin. Much new information regarding the political conditions in the inner recesses of Oman were thus obtained and recorded.[1]

In 1880 the United States appointed a Consul at Muscat in the person of a British merchant, who the next year became also Consular Agent of France in Oman.

Sultan Turki died in 1888 and was succeeded by his second son, Faisal, who had served as a *wali* under his father and had thus gained some experience of public affairs; his claim to the title of Sultan of Muscat was recognized by the British Government in 1890, but no guarantee of support was at first given to him. Faisal eventually expressed his 'earnest desire to be guided in all important matters of policy by the advice of the British Government, and so to conduct the government as to secure the continued friendship and approbation of His Excellency the Viceroy and the British Government'.

The first important event after the formal recognition of Faisal, was the conclusion, in 1891, of a 'Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation'[2] to take the place of the earlier Treaty of Commerce made with Sayyid Sa'id, which it was declared to supersede. This treaty was to remain in force for twelve years absolutely; there was no material departure from the spirit of the old treaty, but it contained a new provision whereby the sultan was precluded from prohibiting the import or export of any particular article of trade, and the levy of export taxes was made conditional upon the consent of the British Government. Previous to this enactment, it had been suggested, as a consequence perhaps of the activity of the French, that a British protectorate over Muscat should be instituted; but, as such a course would have been contrary to the terms of the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862, and was most unlikely to meet with the sanction of the French, an agreement was concluded, in March 1891, whereby the sultan bound 'himself, his heirs and successors, never to cede, to sell, to mortgage, or otherwise give for occupation, save to the British Government, the dominions of Muscat and Oman or any of their dependencies'.[3]

In 1895 rebellion broke out among certain of the tribes of

[1] See Miles (2) (4) (5) and (6).

[2] Aitchison, lxvi. Ratified in 1892.

[3] *Idem*, lxviii.

Oman, mostly of the Hinawi faction, against Faisal's rule, with the complicity, it was thought, of the Sultan of Zanzibar. Growing in force, the rebels took the town of Muscat by surprise and treachery. Measures were taken by the Political Agent for protecting the lives and property of British subjects, but events took so serious an aspect that the direction of political affairs at Muscat was taken over by the Political Resident, who in due course arrived, and intimated that unless the property of British subjects was respected active measures for their protection would be taken. In March the insurrection came to an end and peace was arranged, whereby the sultan paid a large sum to the rebels and promised to condone the rebellion. After much pressure, British subjects who had sustained losses were in part indemnified, and as a consequence of the trouble, the sultan took steps to put his house in order. By the recovery of the strongholds of Nizwa and Izki he considerably increased his hold upon the Oman interior.

We now come to a significant stage in the history of the Gulf. For some time previous to the events just recorded, as hinted in a previous chapter, France and Russia had come to an agreement, with a view to reducing British influence in the Gulf and promoting a joint policy of their own. The task of opposing Britain in Oman devolved on France. As early as 1891 the French ambassador in London complained, though wrongly, that the succession to the sultanate of Muscat had been altered by British influence: this was a first symptom of renewed political interest in Oman affairs on the part of the French, after an interval of more than eighty years. Expression was given in the French Chamber of Deputies, in 1893,[1] to the feeling that England had, without a shadow of right, constituted herself the general arbiter and guardian of the Gulf; and it was proposed to counteract her influence by sending a French Consular Agent 'to open a register of French protégés for all that region'. There were other indications of Franco-Russian interest: a French subject, who had previously attracted notice by his doings on the Trucial Coast in 1893, arrived at Sur in a vessel flying the French flag and endeavoured, unsuccessfully, to obtain a site for a coal depot at that port; and in September of the same year the Russian volunteer cruiser *Nijni Novgorod* called at Muscat, where some of the officers had a private interview with the sultan.

A year later a French Vice-Consular Agent[2] was accredited to

[1] By M. Deloncle, leader of the Colonial Party in the Chamber.

[2] In the person of M. Ottavi, who had a good knowledge of Arabic.

XVI. THREE GENERATIONS OF THE MUSCAT ROYAL FAMILY

SAYYID TAIMUR
(reigning Sultan)

SAYYID FAISAL
(late Sultan)

SAYYID ALI BUI SÄLIM
(First Cousin of Sayyid Faisal)

INFANT SON OF
Sayyid Taimur

Muscat; the register recommended by M. Deloncle was opened, and Arabs with slaving propensities naturally resorted to registration as French protégés [1] in order to avoid search and detention of their vessels by British ships of war. The effect of these actions soon became apparent in the growing reluctance of Faisal to respond to British representations.

When the Hinawi rebellion of 1895 ended, it became clear that a declaration of policy on the part of the British was urgent. After consideration of various lines of action—including the proposal to declare a British protectorate over Oman—the leading shaikhs of the interior were informed that, whatever differences they might have with the Sultan of Muscat, the British Government would not permit attacks upon Muscat and Matra, in view of British interests at those places; at the same time the sultan was made aware that he was not absolved from taking proper and necessary measures for his own defence. The sultan—who more than once had hinted that he considered the British to have failed in their duty to him—received the announcement with unexpected indifference.

However, in 1896, the Government of India presented Faisal with two mortars and ammunition as an addition to his means of defence, and made an offer of naval assistance for the purpose of recovering the province of Dhufar, which had revolted. In addition, at various times, the British aided him to place his finances on a sound basis. Though he at first declined the Dhufar offer, he eventually (in 1897) sought British aid, but still showed an ungracious attitude when the expedition ended in his favour. Nevertheless, it was found possible, at the beginning of 1898, to conclude a first agreement with him regarding the Arms Traffic,[2] a matter which had by this time become acute.

The sultan, who had been reasonably well affected towards Great Britain until France established a Vice-Consulate at Muscat in 1894, now began to show an increasing intimacy with France. This inclination was fostered by visits paid by French vessels to Muscat, which were made occasions of friendly demonstrations and secret conferences with the sultan. The French gunboat *Scorpion*, with the French Vice-Consul on board, paid a visit to a small but defensible harbour five miles south-east of Muscat, called Bandar Jissa, of which photographs were taken and rough plans made. The object of this excursion was not clear at first;

[1] By 1894 the number of vessels holding French colours at Sur amounted to twenty-three.

[2] Aitchison, lxviii.

but, in the *Journal des Débats* of 20th November 1898, the announcement that a French man-of-war had established a coaling station there received corroboration from a report that the Vice-Consul at Muscat had received special promotion to Consul for valuable services! If true, it was clearly a violation by the sultan of his agreement with the British, of 1891, regarding the non-alienation of territory. Upon investigation it appeared that the sultan had in fact granted a concession, which, however, he described in vague terms, and at first professed himself unable to cancel.

The incident was at once made the occasion of a demand for redress of the still outstanding grievances of British subjects who had received injury during the revolution of 1895; and, in addition, demand was made for the cancellation of the coaling-station concession. A British ultimatum presented on the 9th February 1899, accompanied with a show of force by the appearance at Muscat of British war vessels, remained unanswered until the 16th, when the sultan announced that the concession was withdrawn. Relations between him and the British Government immediately improved; but there remained the settlement of the question as between the French and English Governments. The French, who at first demurred to the view maintained by the British Foreign Office, that the Declaration of 1862 precluded the acceptance by either France or Britain of a cession or lease of any Oman territory, eventually accepted the British reading of the declaration. The question was settled in 1900 by French acceptance of the British offer of half of the site already occupied by British coal-sheds in the Makalla Cove near by.

The use of the French flag by native vessels. This matter has been alluded to above, but now requires amplification. The scheme for advancing French influence by a wide distribution of the French flag, though pursued in Oman for the first time at the period under consideration, was by no means a novelty in French political practice, for as early as 1860 the French colonial authorities in Madagascar and the Comoro Islands began to issue French papers to owners of native vessels who were not French subjects. In 1863 this was brought to the notice of H.M. Government, who regarded it as an obstacle to the suppression of the slave trade, for vessels to which the use of the French flag was granted became, *ipso facto*, exempt from search by British cruisers. In 1869, it was reported that every native vessel to the south of Zanzibar then sailed under French colours, and evidence was

abundant of the manner in which the use of the French flag was resorted to, to cover the slave trade in African waters.

It was not until about 1891—when French interests in Oman began to revive—that the question of the flag first attracted notice at Muscat; and it was found that already thirteen *nakhudas*, or masters of native vessels, at the port of Sur, south-east of Muscat, were in possession of French colours, and that the use of the flag had been granted by the French Consul at Aden not only in Madagascar, but also at Obok in British Somaliland and at Aden itself. The Sultan of Muscat, who foresaw that a French claim to protect vessels at sea might easily develop into a claim to protect the persons and property of his Omani subjects on land, took up the question, but was unable to check the growth of the practice. His appeal to the British Government to address a remonstrance to the French Government was shelved, and he was informed that the use of the French flag by his subjects could have no effect as against himself, and that he might safely take any steps he pleased to uphold his jurisdiction in his own waters, over such of his subjects as might have adopted that flag.

Later, conversations between the French and British Governments resulted in the disavowal by the former, in 1891, of the action of their Consul at Aden. Flags issued at Aden were withdrawn from the holders, and assurances given which were interpreted by the British as meaning that the system of granting French flags to aliens would be abandoned in general; but in this respect there was a misunderstanding. At this juncture, the ratification of the 'General Act of the Brussels Slave Trade Conference' of 1890 by France, incurred the plain obligation to restrict the grant of her flag to such mariners as were either French subjects or subjects of a state under French protection. But the restriction was overlooked, either by accident or intent, and the issue of French flags and papers to Arabs of Oman continued. They were now issued at Zanzibar, in place of Aden. Abundant evidence was forthcoming, from this time onward, of the abuse of the French flag by the importers of slaves at Sur and by the runners of slave cargoes at other places in the Persian Gulf, especially to Turkish Iraq. As time went on, it came to be realized that the French assurances of 1891 merely referred to admittedly irregular grants of the flag, as at Aden, and that there was no serious intention to discontinue the grants in what the French considered to be legitimate cases. 'British men-of-war had to see slavers plying with impunity under the protection of a

flag on which red, white and blue—in the Gulf, at all events—stood for something different from Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.' [1]

In the British ultimatum to the sultan in 1899, he was advised to take steps to induce subjects of his to relinquish the use of the French flag, but this effected little; he merely informed the French Vice-Consul at Muscat that he did not recognize the practice, and that he regarded the action of the French as contrary to the Declaration of 1862. Nothing definite resulted, nor could be expected to result, from these steps; nor were pourparlers in London between the English and French Governments any more effective until, in the spring of 1903, a serious crisis arose in consequence of two unforeseen accidents. The sailing vessel *Khadhra*, flying French colours, attempted to leave the port of Sur in defiance of orders of the chief of the Bani bu Ali, and was fired upon and forcibly detained by him. Again, in April, quarantine was broken at Muscat by five natives of Sur arriving in a British mail steamer from Bombay, three of whom were regarded by the French Vice-Consul as being under his protection; the fugitives immediately made for Sur in a sailing boat, were pursued by an official of the sultan, and were captured. In the first case the French Vice-Consul claimed an indemnity for the detention of the *Khadhra*, and instant release of the alleged French protégés in the second. The sultan refused to comply and the British Government upheld him. British vessels appeared in Muscat harbour, and in May the French warship *Infernet* arrived. The Vice-Consul, in conjunction with the commander of the French vessel, made strenuous efforts to obtain the release of the prisoners; but the sultan, feeling he had British support, remained inflexible.

At this point, in consequence of the urgent demand of the French ambassador in London for the release of the three prisoners detained by the sultan, direct discussion took place in London, and local negotiations at Muscat were suspended. On both sides the national honour was seriously engaged, and a deadlock was feared. Ultimately, it was proposed that the matter should be referred to the arbitration of the Hague Tribunal, and this provided an opportune means of solution. Incidentally, it was arranged between the two powers that the prisoners should be liberated, whereat the warships would leave Muscat; the first act was naturally, for some little time, prejudicial to the sultan's prestige in the eyes of the people of Sur.

[1] Bennett, T. J.

The decision of the Tribunal was given in August 1905. It found that the situation was governed in the main by the Brussels Act of 1890, which Act had been ratified by the French Government, and on all essential points the award was substantially in favour of the British claim.[1]

To bring the award into effect, it was decided between the French and British Governments that a proclamation by the sultan to his subjects would be the best means of making the terms known in Oman; and, as an act of friendship, it was decided to accept the list of the French Vice-Consul of persons entitled to hold the French flag. The British view of the situation was that every Omani subject under the French flag became on landing liable to the jurisdiction of the sultan, and that crimes committed at sea under the French flag should not therefore be tried by the French authority at Muscat.

During these events the relations of Sultan Faisal with Great Britain improved. He received an invitation to attend the Coronation Durbar at Delhi in 1903, and sent his eldest son to represent him. In 1900, in consequence of an epidemic of bubonic plague, the sanitary supervision of the ports of Muscat and Matra was placed in British hands. The following year Oman was brought

[1] It was decided, with reference to the legitimacy of the French claims:

That before the 2nd of January, 1892, France was entitled to authorize vessels belonging to subjects of His Highness the Sultan of Muscat to fly the French flag, only bound by her own legislation and administrative rules;

That owners of native vessels, who before 1892 had been authorized by France to fly the French flag, should retain this authorization as long as it was renewed by France to the grantee; and

That after the 2nd of January, 1892, France was not entitled to authorize vessels belonging to subjects of His Highness the Sultan to fly the French flag, except on condition that their owners or fitters-out had established, or should establish, that they had been considered and treated by France as her protégés before the year 1863.

With regard to the effect, transmissibility, and transference of the French flag, the decision was:

That vessels of Oman authorized as aforesaid to fly the French flag, were entitled in the territorial waters of Oman to the inviolability provided by the Franco-Omani Treaty of 17th November 1844 (see p. 234, foot-note 2);

That the authorization to fly the French flag could not be transmitted or transferred to any other person or any other vessel, even if belonging to the same owner; and

That subjects of the Sultan of Oman, who were owners or masters of vessels authorized to fly the French flag, or who were members of the crews of such vessels, or who belonged to the families of such owners or masters, did not enjoy, in consequence of that fact, any right of exterritoriality which could exempt them from the sovereignty, especially from the jurisdiction, of His Highness the Sultan of Oman.

into direct telegraphic communication by the laying of a cable from Jask to Muscat, an event of outstanding importance. In consequence of the comparatively quiet state of the country and the more favourable disposition of the sultan, inland tours of exploration in Oman once more became possible. Notably, Major (now Sir Percy) Cox was able to carry out, unaccompanied by any European, a journey by land from Abu Dhabi, in Trucial Oman, to Muscat, the longest tour made up to that time by a British officer in Oman; and a large amount of valuable information regarding the districts of Baraimi and Oman Proper was the result.[1] Faisal continued to rule until 1913, when he was succeeded by his eldest son Taimur.

One incident of exceptional barbarity, which throws a sidelight on conditions on the rugged coast of the outlying parts of Oman, may be interpolated before closing the story of Muscat. In 1904 the British steamer *Baron Inverdale*, of 2,140 tons—having some thirty souls, mostly British, on board—struck a small island of the Kuria Muria group. A part of the company left the ship in two life-boats. The smaller of these was never heard of again; the other appears to have been driven on to the inhospitable coast of Masira Island, off southern Oman, where the occupants were massacred by members of the tribes of Jannaba and Al bu Isa for the sake of their property.[2] Proofs of guilt being forthcoming, the murderers were sentenced to death by the sultan, and, in accordance with the procedure of Omani criminal justice, were taken to the scene of the massacre and shot.

Bahrain. The chequered history of this island[3] has already received considerable notice in this work. From the eleventh to

[1] Cox (1) and (2).

[2] Without desiring to justify the crime, it may be pointed out that the attitude of the inhabitants of Masira was paralleled, not so many generations ago, in our own history, by our attitude to shipwrecked foes, after the Spanish Armada. 'It is very doubtful', says Lord Ernest Hamilton, 'whether there were any survivors in Ireland from the wreck of the great fleet. The evidence of the State papers of the day goes to show that the natives killed all the survivors whom they found and that the Government executed all those who escaped the natives. One man, named Loughlin McCabe, boasted that he himself had killed eighty Spaniards with a hatchet as they landed on the Donegal rocks from one of the wrecks. Fitzwilliam, who was Deputy at the time of the Armada, made a diligent search of the Connaught and Ulster Coasts with a large armed force, but only succeeded in finding two Spanish and five Dutch boys, all of whom he dutifully hanged. Two brothers of the name of Hoveden, after a long search, collected a handful of survivors in Donegal and sent them up to Dublin, where they were hanged.' *Forty Years on*, p. 220.

[3] Strictly speaking, Bahrain is only one, and by far the largest, of an archipelago,

the beginning of the sixteenth century the inhabitants of Bahrain, to whom an Arab and Persian descent has been variously assigned, were subject to chiefs of their own race. In the time of Alboquerque the island fell into the hands of the Portuguese, and appears to have been retained by them till 1622, when they were expelled by the Persians. Of the Portuguese rule in Bahrain unfortunately but little is known; even the exact date of their occupation has not been ascertained, but in 1521 we read of an Arab insurrection in Bahrain against the Persians and Portuguese, in which the Portuguese factor was tortured and crucified. Portuguese power was again restored a few years after by an expedition under Simeon d'Acunha; now, the sole remaining trace of their power in the island is a ruined fortress near Balad al Qadim (The Old Town).[1]

After the final eviction of the Portuguese the defenceless islanders continued to be subject to an interminable succession of purposeless tyrannies, which has no counterpart elsewhere in the Gulf. The Persian occupation was of uncertain duration, but about the year 1718 a descent was made upon the island by the Omanis,[2] who then occupied it for a short period. In the middle of the eighteenth century control appears to have passed into the hands of the once powerful Huwala Arabs (who even at the present day are strongly represented there), but they were so divided among themselves by feuds that, in 1753, reconquest by Persia was an easy task, and the islands again became a dependency of Persia, at least in name.

The more recent history of Bahrain may be said to date from 1783, in which year the Persians, after the death of Kerim Khan (1779), were driven out by the powerful Utubi Arabs. The petty chiefs of the Persian Gulf, who had been kept in check by the

other islands being Muharraq on the north-east, Naasan and Sitra, and a number of lesser islets and rocks. The term Bahrain once embraced the promontory of Qatar on the opposite Arabian mainland, as well as the oases of Hasa and Qatif, and in medieval days even had a more extensive application.

The islands from early times have attracted the interest of travellers. The whole range of their topography and history has been treated from different points of view by the following authorities, which are here given chronologically: Niebuhr (1); Buckingham; Whitelock (2) (3); Mignan (2); Whish; Palgrave (2); Durand; Bent (1); Zwemer (1); and Stiffe (14). The last-named in particular deals with the commercial history of the islands, which is of much importance. The seaport of Manama, on Muharraq Island, up to the time of the Great War, was the most important entrepôt of the Persian Gulf, but now takes second place to Basra.

[1] Bent (1).

[2] Under Sultan bin Saif.

strong hand of Nadir Shah and his immediate successors, became involved in contests for supremacy, and in 1783 the Utubi tribe —who inhabited Zubara on the mainland, and were virtually independent—with the help of the Al Subah tribe, made themselves masters of the islands.[1] In 1808 the Sultan of Muscat succeeded in conquering Bahrain, but was driven out the following year by the Utubi assisted by the Wahabis. In 1810 the Utubi drove out the Wahabis, and in 1816 repelled another attack by the Sultan of Muscat; since this event, the Utubi have remained paramount in the island, though at various times they professed unwilling allegiance to Muscat, to the Wahabis, to Turkey, and to Persia in turn. Throughout this period, the attitude of Britain towards Bahrain was one of complete abstention from interference between the rivals.

Direct dealings with the newly formed Arab principality by Britain may be said to have begun towards the year 1820, during the British operations against piracy. The shaikhs of Bahrain participated in the benefits of the General Treaty of Peace made with the Trucial chiefs in that year. When, however, the First Maritime Truce of 1835 was arranged, the Shaikh of Bahrain was not invited to become a signatory. During the occupation of the neighbouring territory of Hasa by the Egyptians, in the thirties of the nineteenth century, the shaikh, in spite of protests on the part of the British, fell under their influence and so remained until their retirement in 1840, when the island again came under Wahabi control. In spite of the unsettled state of political affairs, the shaikh, in 1847, signed a treaty with Britain for the suppression of the Slave Trade similar to that executed by the Trucial chiefs. At about the same time, a proposal for the establishment of a British protectorate over the islands was considered and rejected, Britain continuing merely to exercise a ' beneficent supervision ' on general matters.

In 1861—in consequence of political claims put forward both by Persia and Turkey—a convention [2] of much importance, as initiating the subsequent friendly relations between Britain and Bahrain, was signed by the shaikh. By this convention he acknowledged the validity of the various treaties and conventions previously concluded and promised to abstain—in return for the

[1] ' The ruling family is the Al Khalifa section, of the Utub. The Al Khalifa held the kingdom of Hasa too, on the opposite mainland; but they were driven out by the Turks about 1840, and now the Bahrain Islands is all that is left to them of their former extensive territory ' (Bent).

[2] Aitchison, xxxii.

support of the British Government against external aggression—from 'the prosecution of war, piracy and slavery by sea'. He also engaged to submit cases of aggression on himself to British arbitration and, further, undertook to recognize the jurisdiction of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf over British subjects in Bahrain and, subject to certain conditions, to permit the latter to reside and trade in his dominions.

When the Turks annexed Hasa in 1871, they manifested a desire to claim suzerainty of other surrounding districts, including Bahrain. In May of that year Colonel Pelly, the British Resident, visited Bahrain and renewed the assurances of British protection as long as the shaikh continued to observe the convention of 1861. The constant presence of British ships in adjacent waters also proved an effective check on Turkish pretensions, which finally ceased on their evacuation of Hasa in 1913.

In 1880 an agreement[1] was signed with the British Government whereby Shaikh Isa, the chief, bound himself to abstain from entering into negotiations, or making treaties with other governments, except with the sanction of the British Government, and to refuse permission to any, other than the British, to establish diplomatic or consular agencies or coaling depots in Bahrain territory. This noteworthy agreement (ratified in 1881) is known as the First Exclusive Agreement; it was followed in 1892 by a new instrument, known as the Final Exclusive Agreement,[2] whereby the shaikh agreed not to 'cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation any part of his territory save to the British Government'.

In 1895 a long-foreseen danger, in the shape of an invasion of Bahrain by Arab tribes from the mainland of Qatar—mainly Al bin Ali, a discontented tribe of Bahrain, who had earlier emigrated to Qatar and formed a settlement at Zubara—under Turkish influence, took shape, and called for the forcible intervention of Great Britain. On the discovery of a large number of Qatar boats at Zubara armed and prepared for sea, apparently for the invasion of Bahrain, British vessels, after warning, opened fire, disabled a great number, and destroyed or captured many others. The Al bin Ali thereupon sued for peace, and friendly relations with Qatar were restored the following year. After this event the pretensions of Turkey on the island ceased to be a cause of disquiet, with the result that trade flourished and opportunity arose for internal improvement and reform.

[1] Aitchison, xxxiii. [2] *Idem*, xxxiv.

A regular customs administration was first established in Bahrain in 1860, and remained under the direct control of the shaikh until 1888, when the collection of duty was farmed out to local contractors. This system was found open to abuse and peculation, but efforts on the part of the British authorities eventually succeeded in securing considerable reform. This, besides other reforms in the local administration, was achieved largely by the appointment, for the first time in 1900, of a British Assistant Political Agent in the island, a post which was eventually raised to the status of Political Agent in 1904.

In 1904–5 disorderly doings on the part of certain members of the ruling family, and attacks upon foreigners and Persians which he was unable to check, led to a serious rupture with the shaikh. On the presentation of an ultimatum he accepted the British demands, which related solely to matters of internal administration, and his relations with the English have never since been a source of serious anxiety to either side.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Arabian Mission of the Reformed (Dutch) Church, which already had a station at Basra, established a mission at Bahrain. This was an event of some importance in health conditions of Bahrain. The first hospital and dispensary was opened by the Mission in 1902, under the name of the Mason Memorial Hospital, and has done work of great value. The activities of this and other medical missions in the Persian Gulf region are sufficiently described in a most interesting manner in various works.[1]

How far Christian missions have had a direct effect upon Arab thought and on the general trend of public administration and private conviction in the Persian Gulf must always be a matter of controversy. The writer is, however, convinced that their effect has been only less profound than that of the British political and mercantile agencies. Each has set, in the sphere of its respective activities, a high standard of personal conduct and public rectitude. British Political Agents or Consuls and Merchants have, by their personal dealings with chiefs and individuals, gained a respect and confidence which has given added weight to the precepts of missionary bodies, who themselves have not always appraised at its full value this silent testimony to the practical worth of the ethical system of which they are the devoted and worthy exponents. On the other hand, the disinterested, but not dispassionate zeal, and the high qualities and personal ability of individual missionaries,

[1] Notably, Zwemer (1), and Harrison.

has, beyond all question, permeated the Arab social and religious system, and has set up standards of public conduct and personal rectitude which have been tacitly and indeed unconsciously adopted by an increasingly large body of educated men.

Kuwait. This town and principality came into prominence during the fierce controversy which raged, just previous to the Great War, over a site for the terminus of the 'Baghdad Railway'. The strategical and commercial advantages of its situation, its proximity to the Tigris-Euphrates corridor, and its intimate connexion with the Central Arabian Kingdom of Ibn Saud, to which region it afforded easy access, have all combined to render the position of the Kuwait shaikhdom of special importance.

The territory of Kuwait forms a semicircle of rather featureless country on the western side of the head of the Gulf, of which the base is a stretch of low coastline of some two hundred miles. The region has received much less attention by the independent traveller than most places in the Gulf, and until comparatively recent times was little known.[1] The town of Kuwait, situated on the southern side of a fine bay, has no very ancient history. It is, Pelly tells us, only from 100 to 200 years of age. The name is a corruption or diminutive of *kut*, or fort. The ancestors of the present chief lived on the creeks near the mouths of the Shatt al Arab, and were probably not strangers to occasional acts of piracy. Their original fort was at Umm Qasr, at the head of the Zubair Creek. The bay of Kuwait is also called Gurn (Grane), or horn, in allusion to the shape of the bay.[2]

The first settlers of Kuwait are said to have belonged to the Utubi, themselves derived from the Anaiza of northern Central Arabia, and in the beginning the place was probably an ordinary Arab settlement, situated on the southern side of the bay and protected by a small fort. In the first fifty years after its foundation the settlement grew rapidly in wealth and importance; and the Utubi, partly by means of matrimonial alliances with other tribes in the neighbourhood, succeeded in making their position good against the Bani Khalid who, hitherto, had dominated the whole north-eastern coast of Arabia.

[1] Almost the only unofficial sources of information are Stocqueler, Pelly (1) (8) (9), the Danish traveller Raunkaier, and Lovat Fraser (3). Other sources not available to the general reader are various Official Reports, and Bombay Selections No. XXIV.

[2] Pelly (8). The concluding statement is more probably to the shape of Ras al Ardh.

Great impetus was given to the growth of Kuwait by the siege and capture of Basra by the Persians in 1776–9, in consequence of which numbers of its inhabitants migrated thence. During the occupation of the town by the Persians [1] the bulk of the Indian trade of Basra with Baghdad, Aleppo, Smyrna, and Constantinople was diverted to Kuwait. By 1790 the town had begun to share in the commercial prosperity which the seizure of Bahrain by the Utubi in 1783 had brought to these last, by drawing them into the carrying trade of Arabia; goods were imported there from Muscat, Zubara, Bahrain, and Qatif.

After the recovery of Basra by the Turks, on account of difficulties with Ottoman officials, the staff of the British factory at Basra withdrew temporarily to Kuwait in 1793. Among those who migrated thither was Mr. Harford Jones, afterwards Sir Harford Jones Brydges, to whom we are indebted for a valuable history of the Wahabis.[2] The latter committed aggressions on Kuwait during that period, and subsequently made various attempts to incorporate the town with their dominions, but at no time successfully.

For about forty years after the return of the British factors to Basra we hear little of Kuwait politically, and the town seems to have escaped notice by the British. In 1831, however, the traveller Stocqueler was there, 'having been', he says, 'almost the only European who has visited the place for many years'.[3] He gives a highly interesting account of the town, which in his time extended about a mile along the shore, and contained about four thousand inhabitants. He suggests that the harbour may probably have been occupied by the Portuguese, 'on account of the command it gives over the mouth of the river of the Arabs, and the power it thus conferred of interrupting the Turkish and Venetian trade with India'. The town, he says, was then governed by a shaikh who kept no armed force, but levied a duty of 2 per cent. upon all imports.

On reaching the coast of the Persian Gulf in Hasa, when fighting the Wahabis in 1838–9, the Egyptians placed an emissary at Kuwait, whose real functions were undoubtedly political. At this

[1] Longrigg, p. 184, n.

[2] Brydges (2).

[3] In Chap. II he makes an interesting comment on the Wahabis: 'While I was at Koete,' he says, 'a body of Wahabee Arabs, with their black tents, camels, and white asses, were encamped without the walls. The men appeared to have good-natured faces, mixed with a little cunning; and many wore their hair arranged in small plaits, and falling about their faces. Their women seemed fair and tall.'

time the ruler of Kuwait was one Shaikh Jubair, who, on the whole, maintained friendly relations with the British Government up to the time of his death in 1859. He was succeeded by Shaikh Subah, during whose rule Colonel Pelly, in 1865, made his remarkable journey from Kuwait to meet the ruler of Nejd at Riyadh,[1] and first realized the possible future of Kuwait as a commercial port and meeting-place of sea-borne and other trade in the Persian Gulf. Palgrave (1862–3)[2] supplies details of interest concerning Kuwait, in his day.

'Among all the seamen,' he says, 'who ply the Persian Gulf, the mariners of Koweyt hold the first rank in daring, in skill, and in solid trustworthiness of character. Fifty years since their harbour with its little town was a mere nothing; now it is the most active and the most important port of the northerly Gulf, Aboo-Shahr (Bushire) hardly or even not excepted. Its chief, Eysa, enjoys a high reputation both at home and abroad, thanks to good administration and prudent policy; the import duties are low, the climate is healthy, the inhabitants friendly, and these circumstances, joined to a tolerable roadstead and a better anchorage than most in the neighbourhood, draw to Koweyt hundreds of small craft which else would enter the ports of Aboo-Shahr or Basra. . . . In its mercantile and political aspect this town forms a sea outlet, the only one for Jabal Shammar, and in this respect like Trieste for Austria. Kuwait is only fifteen days' distance or thereabout from Hail.'

Before many years had elapsed, steamers of the British India Steam Navigation Company began to make Kuwait a port of call. This aroused the jealousy of Turkish authorities in Iraq, who were apprehensive that Kuwait's prosperity might be prejudicial to the trade of Basra; the steamship service was therefore suspended, but only for the time being.[3]

Thenceforward, until the accession of Shaikh Mubarak, strictly speaking a usurper, in 1896, Kuwait occupied little or no place in British political affairs, the principality being regarded at home as under the exclusive influence of the Porte. Mubarak, nervous

[1] Pelly (8) (9). In connexion with this journey, he tells an amusing story: 'In the interior smoking is strictly prohibited as is also the wearing of silk, and swearing. A Bedouin or other Wahabee found smoking would be killed. An amusing story was related to me yesterday of a man who complained to the Amir's son that one of his neighbours smokes. "How do you know it?" asked the Amir. "I smelt it," replied the man. "Then you entered your neighbour's private apartment," rejoined the Amir. "No," said the man, "I just put the tip of my nose in." Whereupon the Amir ordered the executioner to snip off the tip of the complainant's nose, so as to save it from the temptation of sniffing in another man's harem for the future.'

[2] Palgrave (2).

[3] A weekly service was established in 1901 and has been maintained ever since.

that the Turks would annex his territory, made repeated overtures in 1897 for British protection; but to this H.M. Government was unfavourably disposed, as also to more interference than was necessary for the maintenance of the general peace in Gulf waters. In 1898, however, Russian activity induced Britain to reconsider her attitude and to adopt measures for countering foreign influence at Kuwait. There was reason to suspect that the Russians wished to establish a port or coaling station there, and attempts were being made to obtain a concession from the Porte in favour of Count Kapnist, a Russian subject, for the construction of a railway from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf—a scheme which, if it had materialized, might have ended in the creation of Russian territorial rights at Kuwait.

In 1899, with a view to forestalling Russian action, an engagement on similar lines to that made with the Sultan of Muscat in 1891 (see p. 237) was entered into with Shaikh Mubarak. The effect of this agreement was to stir the Turks to efforts to assert themselves at Kuwait, but this met with the opposition of the shaikh, who remained staunch to his agreement with the British. The year 1900 was marked by the visit of a German Railway Commission to Kuwait in quest of a suitable terminus for the projected 'Baghdad Railway': but for the agreement of 1899 this incident might have had results prejudicial to the position of Great Britain throughout the Persian Gulf.

At this stage Mubarak took a prominent share in a series of movements which eventually led to the restoration of the Ibn Saud dynasty in Nejd in 1901.[1] In 1902–3 Kuwait was visited by Russian and French cruisers, but this did not affect the local situation. In 1903 Lord Curzon, in the course of his tour of the Persian Gulf, paid a visit to Kuwait and was enthusiastically received. Soon afterwards a British Political Agency was established at Kuwait. To this appointment the Turkish Government made energetic but ineffectual protests.

Thanks to the exceptional ability of Shaikh Mubarak and, to but little less extent, of his successors, the Political Agent at Kuwait has never been called upon to make representations to the ruler of Kuwait affecting the internal administration of the principality. Gunboats and aeroplanes have protected the town (in 1920) against Wahabi incursions, but no troops have ever been landed, and the Political Agent has no armed guard. Indian traders have never established themselves in Kuwait, as at Muscat, Bahrain, and on

[1] Fully treated by Philby (3), vol. i, chap. iii.

the Trucial Coast, and of all the independent principalities of the Gulf Kuwait has remained the least disturbed by foreign influence. The people of the town are very generally considered superior, alike in business ability and in those elusive qualities that go to make the good and dependable citizen, to those of any other Arab port; in no part of the Persian Gulf have the relations alike of the shaikh and of his people with the British Government, its representatives, and with British merchants been more uniformly pleasant and cordial.

XVI

THE PERSIAN GULF IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

'I do not think that it has ever been suggested that there has been any weakening of the position by the present Government, or any other Government, in reference to our strength in the Persian Gulf. . . . Our position in the Persian Gulf . . . is at the present time absolutely untouched and unassailable.'

Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, House of Lords, May 14, 1924.

THE earlier decades of the nineteenth century may not inaptly be described as an epoch of political missions to the Persian court, and these need brief notice in order fully to grasp the trend of events in the Gulf itself. Then began that solicitude—not always disinterested perhaps, and not confined wholly to Britain—for the well-being of the different states and principalities on both sides of the Gulf, which, by slow degrees, and insidiously, brought the various states more or less under the tutelage—not to use a stronger term—of certain European powers, each with a different end in view, and which gave rise to jealousies, rivalries, or conflicts between these powers.

On the part of England there was the first Malcolm mission to Persia of 1799, which was sent at the instance of the Marquess Wellesley, then Governor-General of India, for the purpose of establishing treaty relations.[1] It was partially successful and Fath Ali Shah concluded a treaty with Britain, to the exclusion of France, also anxious to obtain a share in the control, not alone of Persian affairs, but also of certain other of the Gulf states.[2]

In 1802 the French made overtures to Persia which were at first coldly received, and in 1803, as we have seen, an effort by the French to establish an agency at Muscat failed. But, in 1807,

[1] The objects of the mission in Sir John Malcolm's own words were: 'To restore India from the annual alarm of Zemaun Shah's (ruler of Afghanistan) invasion; to counteract the possible attempts of those villainous, but active democrats, the French; and to restore to some part of its former prosperity, a trade which has been in a great degree lost.'

In the words of Gardanne: 'En 1789, la République française eut la louable pensée de rétablir en Orient l'influence de la France et de continuer sa politique traditionnelle dans ces contrées. Elle envoya dans ce but, en Asie, deux savants, MM. Olivier et Bruguière, qui, sous l'apparence d'observations et de recherches d'histoire naturelle, avaient la mission d'y faire des alliances. Mais il n'en résulta qu'un échange de lettres polies avec quelques États.'

the shah, alarmed at the Russian menace and having been disappointed of British assistance against Russian aggression on his north-western provinces, made overtures to France, with the ultimate result that the Treaty of Finkenstein was signed, whereby Russia was to be regarded as 'equally an enemy of the kings of Persia and of France'. A few months later, the Gardanne mission appeared in Persia, ostensibly to train the Persian army on European lines, but in reality to bring into effect the terms of the Treaty of Finkenstein [1] between Napoleon and Fath Ali Shah.

Both the Home and Indian Governments became alarmed at the spread of French influence in Persia. Sir Harford Jones Brydges, who had served as Resident at Basra, was dispatched on a mission from England with full powers to negotiate a treaty with the shah; and, about the same time, Malcolm was sent from India to undertake much the same task: the latter, however, did not reach Tehran and returned to India. A preliminary treaty was successfully negotiated by Sir Harford; the French mission, not having fulfilled hopes, withdrew, and on their loss of Mauritius in 1810 French influence in Persia came practically to an end, for a period.[2]

Malcolm was sent on a third mission in 1810;[3] the Harford

[1] The full terms of this treaty are given by Alfred de Gardanne. On his part, the shah agreed, by Art. 8, to break all political and commercial relations with Britain, to open hostilities without delay, and to recall the Persian minister whom he had sent to Bombay. The Consuls and Agents of the East India Company in Persia or the ports of the Persian Gulf were immediately to quit their residences. English merchandise was to be seized, and all communication with England, whether by land or sea, interdicted.

[2] French activities in the East at this period are very fully treated by Fontanier (2) (3).

[3] Sir John's reflections on this mission are of much interest: 'Ten years', he says, 'had elapsed since my first visit to the Court of Persia and many changes had occurred, both in men and measures. The Russians, within this short period, had advanced their frontier from the north of the Caucasus to the banks of the Araxes, a space of about four hundred miles. Buonaparte had laid his plans for chaining the bear of Russia and the lion of Persia, with the design of harnessing them to his war-chariot, that he might drive in triumph over the rich plains of India. His name was familiar to numbers in Persia, and some few understood the character of his power. Among these was my shrewd old friend, Aga Mahomed Casim Wala, of Isfahan, who is at once a professor, a poet, a philosopher, and a very inquisitive politician. "This Buonaparte", said he to me one morning when I paid him a visit in his apartment at the College, "is a very wonderful man; he wields empires as if they were clubs. After he has settled with Turkey, he will, unless our king shapes his policy to his liking, give Persia a knock on the head with Russia, and then make use of both to overthrow your power in India. Happen what will," said old Aga,

Jones treaty was ratified, and upon Malcolm's resignation in 1811 control of diplomatic relations passed to Sir William Gore Ouseley, by whom the 'Definitive Treaty'[1] was finally concluded. The eventual effect of these agreements was to bring about a revival of British commercial intercourse with Persia, which had languished, and to establish greatly improved diplomatic relations.

While all this was going on, Persia was experiencing disastrous campaigns with Russia, the first ending in her defeat in 1812 and the Treaty of Gulistan (1813). The second campaign, in which she lost further territory in the north-west, was utterly disastrous and ended, in 1828, in the Treaty of Turkmanchai (1828) and Unkiar Skelessi (1833). Feelings of mutual hostility marked the relationship, at this time, between Russia and England. Russia's successes in the field against both Persia and Turkey incited her ambition for conquest farther eastward. The ultimate design generally attributed to her was—rightly or wrongly—one of breaking down the Persian and Afghan kingdoms, which formed a barrier athwart her path to British India. To reach the 'warm water' has undoubtedly been the traditional ambition of Russia, and one direction in which she sought this was that of the Persian Gulf. It is not, however, the place here to pursue this question farther. It is amply treated, from various points of view, by a number of writers,[2] and to these the interested reader is referred.

On the death of Fath Ali Shah (1834) and his succession by Muhammad Shah, the attitude of the Persian ruler towards Britain underwent an entire change. Encouraged by Russia, Muhammad commenced military operations against Herat, in spite of protests, on the part of the British minister at Tehran, that the 'enterprise in which his Majesty was engaged was looked upon by the Queen's ministers as being undertaken in a spirit of hostility towards British India, and as being totally incompatible with the spirit and intention of the alliance between Great Britain and Persia'. The attack upon Afghanistan had its immediate repercussion on Persian Gulf affairs. Protest having failed, a British military force from India occupied the island of Kharag

"he is a magnificent fellow, a perfect Faringee Chenghiz Khan."' *Sketches of Persia.*

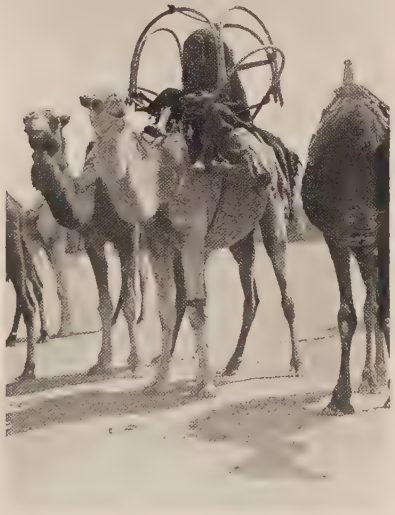
[1] Aitchison, vii. This treaty bound Persia to assist in preventing an attack upon India; and Britain to give active support to Persia in repelling invasion of her territory by any European power.

[2] Among others: Curzon (1) (4); Drouville; Ferrier; Kinneir (2); Kotzebue; Brydges (2); Mahan (2); Vambéry (2); Malcolm (1); Mignan (2); Popowski; Rawlinson (6); Rouire; Sheil; Stuart, D., &c.

a. Persian Fortune-teller

b. One of the Ikhwan of Nejd at Kuwait

c. Arab youth with falcon at Kuwait



d. Arab women on camels at Kuwait

in 1838, and continued to do so until the Shah raised the siege of Herat in 1842. The British Residency was moved there temporarily from Bushire.[1] When the British withdrew from Kharag, Persia stationed regular troops there, and in consequence the small population emigrated *en masse* and did not return until the garrison was eventually withdrawn.

In 1856–7 the island of Kharag was occupied a second time by the British, during the war which broke out between Britain and Persia, again over the question of Herat. In this campaign the British forces operated from Bushire; but the operations came to an early close, owing to the collapse of the Persian resistance. The principal incidents connected with the Gulf were the capture of Rishahr on 9th December 1856 and of Bushire on 10th December; the defeat of the Persians at Khushab on 8th February 1857; and the bombardment and occupation of Mohammerah, chiefly a naval operation, on 26th March.[2] For a masterly statement of the incidents of this campaign, the reader is referred to *Lieut.-General Sir James Outram's Persian Campaign in 1857*, which comprises General Orders and Dispatches relating to the Military Operations in Persia, from the landing of the forces to the Treaty of Peace,[3] which was signed at Paris on 4th March 1857, by which Persia engaged to abstain from all interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. On the close of the war, relations between Persia and Britain resumed an amicable course, which opened the way for the construction of the system of telegraphic communication and for other reforms described below.

In 1846 Nasr ud Din Shah came to the throne, and reigned until 1896. The political relations of Russia and Persia during his reign present no very special feature; but the latter part of the period gave evidence of increasing Russian influence and pressure in northern Persia, though it was rather commercial than military in character. Russian and British political rivalry in the Persian field still prevailed, and was at times intense; but the aspect which it assumed was outwardly economic, and the Anglo-

[1] It was even proposed at this time to purchase the island from the Persian Government for the permanent location of the Residency in place of Bushire; but the proposal did not materialize (see also p. 182).

[2] A naval expedition under Commander Rennie steamed up the Karun as far as Ahwaz and landed about 300 men to attack the Persian army posted on the river bank. The Persian force, which could not have numbered less than 10,000 men, was so demoralized that it fled in confusion. (Bell, J.)

[3] See also Trotter; Low; Hunt; Bell, J.; and Watson.

Russian understanding of 1834, for the maintenance of the independence and integrity of Persia, still held, and was even reaffirmed by the parties, in 1888.

After the Crimean War, Russia embarked on a forward policy in Asia, and her progress eastward and southward seemed for a time to be viewed by Persia with a complacent eye. About 1869, however, Russia's proceedings on the eastern coasts of the Caspian Sea brought the question of the Russo-Persian frontier in that region under dispute, and thenceforward Persia was again all caution in her dealings with her northern neighbour.

In illustration of the attitude of Russia in commercial and economic questions affecting the Persian Gulf during the latter part of Nasr ud Din's reign, the action which she took in regard to the construction of railways in Persia may be quoted. In 1887 the Shah was brought by the Russian minister at Tehran to agree not to authorize the construction of any railway or waterway in Persia by a foreign company without previous consultation with Russia. This engagement was extorted by the threat that, if any such concession were granted, the Tsar might withdraw from his position as a guarantor of the integrity of Persia; it was in fact clearly directed against a proposed British scheme for a railway from Ahwaz to Tehran.

A few months later, as a counter-stroke to the opening of the lower Karun River to navigation, in 1888—which was regarded as a British political and commercial success—the Russian minister at Tehran, in 1889, obtained a written agreement from the Shah which conferred on a Russian company the option of undertaking the construction of any railways in Persia which might be resolved upon in the following five years, during which period no other company should be granted such permission.

As to incidents in the Persian Gulf area in particular. Symptoms of unusual activity on the part of Russia became apparent in the eighties. In 1887 Russian officers in the service of the Shah visited Isfahan, Shiraz, and Bushire, ostensibly on a tour of inspection. A further indication of the strategical importance attached by Russia to the strait giving entrance to the Persian Gulf, was shown by the journey of a Russian engineer officer, by way of Bandar Abbas, to Hormuz. He made a survey of the island, and on his departure, after two days, gave it out that the island would be made a Russian coaling-station.

In 1896 the existence of bubonic plague in India gave a further pretext to Russia for intervention in Persian Gulf affairs, by her

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appointment, in 1897, of two medical agents, ostensibly to study the plague at Bushire, where, in point of fact, it did not then exist. These officers were succeeded by others in 1898–9. It was significant, in connexion with the design of Russia at the Strait of Ormuz mentioned above, that all these medical men paid visits to Bandar Abbas as well as to Basra.

In 1898 the Russian Consul at Baghdad took action in connexion with a scheme to establish a Russian port and naval base in the Persian Gulf, and the fact that the same year Count Kapnist, a Russian of high place, applied to the Porte for a concession to construct a railway from Tripoli in Syria to Kuwait, seemed to point to Kuwait as the Russian objective.[1]

Further instances might be given of British and Russian conflict of interest in Persia and the Gulf, but enough has been said to show that the antagonism was very real. It did not diminish as time went on; but this question may be pursued in detail by reference to a number of works.[2] It suffices here to state that an understanding between the two powers, of a sort, was eventually come to by the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, the effect of which falls outside the scope of this work.

Nasr ud Din Shah, like his great predecessor Nadir, manifested during his reign, though somewhat intermittently, an ambition to possess a naval force in the Persian Gulf. About the year 1865 he proposed to acquire three or four armed steamers, on the plea that, commanded by British naval officers and manned by Arabs or Indians, they should undertake police duties in Persian waters; but the proposal did not materialize. Some fifteen years later, it seems to have been suggested to the Shah that if the

[1] Of the question of establishing a port in the Persian Gulf, Lord Curzon wrote in 1892: 'A Russian port in the Persian Gulf, that dear dream of so many a patriot from the Neva or the Volga, would, even in times of peace, import an element of unrest into the life of the Gulf that would shake the delicate equilibrium so laboriously established, would wreck a commerce that is valued at many millions sterling, and would let loose again the passions of jarring nationalities only too ready to fly at each others' throats. Let Great Britain and Russia fight their battles or compose their differences elsewhere, but let them not turn into a scene of sanguinary conflict the peaceful field of a hard-won trade. I should regard the concession of a port upon the Persian Gulf to Russia by any power as a deliberate insult to Great Britain, as a wanton rupture of the *status quo*, and as an intentional provocation to war; and I should impeach the British minister, who was guilty of acquiescing in such a surrender, as a traitor to his Country.'—*Persia and the Persian Question.*

[2] Curzon (1) and (4), vol. ii, chap. xxv; Sykes (7), vol. ii; Chirol; Stuart, D.; Popowski; Wyllie; &c.

Persian coast were watched and its ports brought under better control, the productiveness of the customs would be greatly increased. To this end, the Persian Government decided to acquire one vessel a year, and so build up a flotilla for use in Gulf waters. A contract was given to a German firm for the construction of two vessels. The larger of these, the *Persepolis*, of 600 tons and 450 horse-power, carrying four Krupp guns, arrived at Bushire in 1885, and the smaller, the *Susa*, was soon after sent out in parts to be put together at Mohammerah. The *Persepolis* was eventually taken into use for administrative purposes in the Gulf, and the *Susa* was placed on the Karun River, above Ahwaz, as a dispatch boat, under the orders of the governor of Arabistan. Beyond this, the scheme of a Persian fleet did not mature.

In this work, much space has been devoted to the activities of the East India Company, and in fact much of the history of the Gulf has been intimately associated with it. It should here be noted that in the early years of the nineteenth century the position of the East India Company, in the East as a whole, underwent a complete change. Up to that time it had held a complete monopoly of British trade in this region. At first, as we have seen, a purely commercial concern, the Company gradually assumed a far-reaching political character. In 1784 Pitt's India Bill created a board of control as a department of the English Government, to exercise political, military, and financial supervision over the British possessions in India; from this date the direction of Indian policy passed definitely from the Company to the Governor-General in India and the Ministry in London. After further stages which need not here be detailed, under Earl Grey's Act of 1833 the Company was deprived of its commercial monopoly in the East, and henceforward ceased to be a trading concern and exercised only administrative functions. Such an arrangement could not, in the nature of things, be permanent, and the great cataclysm of the Indian Mutiny was followed by the entire transference, in 1858, of the Indian Administration from the Company to the Crown.

There was a corresponding curtailment of the activities of the Company in the Gulf itself, and a gradual throwing-open of trade in these waters to all comers. The restrictions imposed by the Bombay Government came first into operation at Muscat as early as 1805, and were renewed in 1809. It was not, however, until 1822 that a definite order for the discontinuance of private trade

in the Gulf, ' by Political Officers of all ranks and descriptions ', became general. Thenceforward, we find no references whatever to the East India Company's trade in the Persian Gulf, in their corporate capacity. British influence in the Gulf, in fact, gradually assumed a purely political character.

Brief reference must be made to the work in the Gulf of the Indian Navy, which ceased to exist in 1863. This fighting force was the creation of the East India Company. In the early days of the Company, from the time of their first setting foot in India and establishing factories at Surat and other places, they were compelled, about the year 1615, to build, equip, and man a small fleet of ' grabs and gallivats ', to afford them protection from the aggressions of the Portuguese and their trading craft from the pirates who infested the Eastern seas. Thus came about the formation of a ' local Marine ' at Surat. When, in 1668, the East India Company took formal possession of Bombay, transferred to them by the Crown, the fleet, which by that time had grown much in strength, became known as the Bombay Marine, and in process of time developed into the Indian Navy. It had a glorious two and a half centuries of existence. The nature of the work it had to undertake, the worthy part it played, and the hardships which it experienced cannot better be expressed than in the words of Low,[1] who wrote its history.

' The sphere ', he says, ' of duty of the Indian Navy was remote, the operations, oftentimes, insignificant, and the results of small import to the destinies of the world. . . . It is both more glorious and less exacting on one's sense of duty to participate in some great European conflict, with such incentives as " all the world " for spectators, the applause of an admiring people, and a grateful sovereign ready to shower rewards on the victors, than to serve through a " little war " such as many we shall detail, the very name of which is forgotten—a war waged in an obscure inland sea or gulf, in a deadly climate, against a blood-thirsty foe who gives no quarter, and with the depressing knowledge that success brings no honours to the survivors who, too often, carry away with them the seeds of disease and premature death.'

Lord Curzon,[2] too, adds his tribute to the work of the Indian Navy in his reference to ' the indomitable gallantry with which, in ages when merchants required to wield the sword almost as deftly as the pen, the representatives of English trading companies carried the flag and the merchandise, and the high name of Great

[1] *History of the Indian Navy* (1613–1863).
[2] Curzon (4).

Britain, into lands where all risked, and many lost, their lives in each venture'.

The Gulf, especially, afforded to these hardy police of the Eastern waters a fresh field for the display of those qualities of enterprise and skill which they had already exhibited on the west coast of India. On the disbanding of the Indian Navy, the duties performed by it devolved on the ships of the Royal Navy, but some years elapsed before a satisfactory method of working was devised, and in the interval British political interests in the Gulf suffered. At last, in 1871, arrangements were introduced which made co-operation between the Royal Navy and the Indian authorities possible.

An account of the Persian Gulf would be very incomplete without a summary of the splendid survey work—marine, river, and land—initiated and carried out during the nineteenth century by British effort and enterprise. Only charts of very doubtful accuracy of the Persian Gulf existed prior to that time.[1] These charts were assiduously corrected over a period of three years by Lieutenant John McCluer, who in the course of his surveys made drawings [2] of various parts of the coast to facilitate navigation, and wrote useful directions for the same purpose. The result was a chart of the whole of the north-eastern shore of the Gulf and of the Shatt al Arab; but the south-western shore remained, in great part, practically unknown to the European sailor.

The piratical activities of the Jawasmi showed the urgent need of more intimate knowledge of this intricate stretch of coast-line. Attempts at survey were made from 1811 onward, but danger from the pirates (at this time in complete control of these waters) made their execution impracticable. It was not until the year 1820, on the successful conclusion of the third expedition against the Jawasmi, that a proper survey of the south and west waters of the Persian Gulf, beginning at Ras Musandam, could be made. With this great work—in the face of great difficulties, climatic and other—the names of Maughan, Guy, and Brucks are associated, their survey of the Arabian coast being completed in 1825. Operations were then begun by Haines in the Gulf of Oman, and

[1] In 1772 was fitted out the very first surveying expedition undertaken by the Indian Navy, when officers under the command of Robinson explored the coast of Makran and part of that of Persia.

[2] These were used by the hydrographer of the East India Company, Alexander Dalrymple (q.v. Bibliography).

the survey of the Makran coast to Karachi was finished in 1829. These first marine surveys of the Gulf were an arduous and painful task, owing to the smallness of the vessels employed and their total unsuitableness to the climatic conditions; a lamentably large proportion of the officers who took part in them gave their lives or broke down in health from the effects of climate and hardship.

A survey of the south-east coast of Arabia, begun by Haines in 1833, was discontinued in 1837; and, during the war in Afghanistan (1839–44), marine surveys by the Indian Navy were almost entirely in abeyance, though in 1839, during the occupation of Kharag Island, a report on Kuwait harbour was made.

In 1857 the various Gulf surveys of 1820–8 called for revision, and this was made by Constable assisted by Stiffe, who completed their work in 1860. The result was a general chart of the Persian Gulf in two sheets, the essential features of which were accurate and reliable. A survey of the harbour of Bahrain was made by Whish at about the same time.

After the Indian Navy ceased to exist, no fresh surveys were undertaken until 1871. Then the Government of Bombay, in consultation with Colonel Pelly, the Political Resident, deputed an officer of the Royal Navy to make detailed surveys of Bahrain and Qatar waters, the Khor al Hajar, and the Bahmishir—the latter in connexion with the opening of the Karun River to navigation. In 1890 the sea approaches of the Shatt al Arab and Bahmishir were surveyed, and the impracticability of the latter for use by ocean steamers was demonstrated. British tidal observation stations were established at Bushire and Muscat in the nineties, and telegraphic observations were undertaken at the Bushire and Jask stations for the determination of longitude.

Little further was then done until Lord Curzon's viceregal visit to the Gulf in 1903 gave renewed impetus, and between this year and 1914 various detailed surveys of a local character, but nevertheless of great value, resulted. To British initiative alone are due the charts of the Persian Gulf, which are to-day available to all nations, and which, though by no means perfect, compare favourably with those of any similar area not under direct European control.

Communications in the Gulf. A scheme which had held prominent place in the minds of many, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, was the establishment of direct communication between the Mediterranean Sea and the Gulf, by rail or

river, or a combination of both—in other words, the improvement of communication between England and India. The details of the various proposals which were made are well set forth elsewhere,[1] and the barest outline of the principal activities in this direction will suffice here. In 1835 an expedition of outstanding importance, under Colonel F. R. Chesney, left England for Turkish Iraq to make the experiment (for which the sanction of the Porte had been obtained, and for which the British Parliament had granted £20,000 and the East India Company £5,000) of introducing steam navigation upon the Euphrates. Two river steamers were launched upon its upper course in 1835–6, one of which was unfortunately lost in a storm; the other navigated in turn the waters of the Euphrates, Tigris, Shatt al Arab, and Karun. At the end of 1836 the expedition was broken up. The experiment, in so far as it related to the establishment of rapid and certain communication between England and India, cannot be described as a success;[2] but Colonel Chesney's surveys of the three great rivers of Iraq mark an important step in geographical progress. The Red Sea route continued in popular favour, as better suited for the conveyance of passengers and heavy goods than the overland way[3] to the East.

The land and river surveys initiated by the Chesney expedition were continued with great energy for more than twenty years by the officers of the Indian Navy employed with the British Mesopotamia flotilla, and they extended to Arabistan and the confines of Persia. Notable among these surveys was that of Commander

[1] Notably by Chesney (1) (2) and Ainsworth (2) (3).

[2] Of the expedition, Chesney, in his preface, wofully says: 'When I returned from the East in 1837, it was with the full belief that a question of such vast importance to Great Britain—nationally, politically and commercially—would be at once taken up warmly by the Government and the public. The way had been opened—difficulties which at one time looked formidable had been overcome; the Arabs and the Turkish Government were most favourable to the projected Line to India. But thirty-one years have since passed and *nothing has been done!*'

[3] From the time of the Seven Years War with France, the route between Europe and India by way of Aleppo and Basra was much used by the East India Company, and even by the British Government, as a safe and fairly speedy line of communication. This overland route, or 'Desert Mail' as it was called, seems to have been managed by the Company's representatives at Aleppo and Basra, and as a rule was efficiently maintained. The transport of goods between Basra and Baghdad, or vice versa, could be effected at fairly reasonable rates by river boat in Turkish Iraq. Merchandise could be conveniently forwarded between Kuwait or Basra and Aleppo by caravan, the journey from Kuwait to Baghdad occupying about thirty, and from Kuwait to Aleppo about eighty, days. The charge per camel-load of 700 English pounds, covering presents to shaikhs *en route*, was 130 Bombay rupees.

Felix Jones (1843–54) of the little-known upper reaches of the Tigris, of which he has given us a very full and interesting narrative of his experiences.[1]

The history of the advance made, by the contributions of travellers, in our knowledge of the territories on the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf, up to the opening of the twentieth century, is fully set forth by Dr. Hogarth[2] and need not here be retold. In Persia, the surveys made for the construction of lines of telegraph across the country contributed materially to the production of more accurate maps of that area. The surveys for these lines, and the telegraphic determination of longitudes at various points, covered south and central Persia with a network of route-surveys, punctuated by accurately determined points, and resulted in the publication in 1873–4 of one of the most valuable maps of Persia ever made, by Captain O. B. C. St. John.

Matters moved slowly in the direction of establishing systematic steam navigation on any of the Iraq rivers.[3] As a tardy outcome of the Chesney expedition of 1835–6, the *City of London* was the first steamer to ply on them for commercial purposes, and was placed on the Tigris in 1861 by that pioneer British firm, Messrs. Lynch & Co., associated with other shareholders. Under the name of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, Ltd., and in the face of much opposition on the part of the Turkish Government, this service of river steamers has survived to the present time.

The Karun River became the object of special British solicitude in the eighties, by which time its value as a channel of communication into the interior had become fully recognized. Much earlier than this, the latent value of the Karun—as a trade route and avenue of approach to the great towns and centres of grain cultivation in the west of Persia, and as an opening more particularly for British and Anglo-Indian commerce—was first brought prominently to notice by the writings of Layard[4] and Lieutenant Selby.[5] The former, from his intimate relations with

[1] Jones, J. F. [2] Hogarth (2).

[3] In 1837 the East India Company had one steamer, and in 1840 three additional steamers for river work, all iron-built and heavily armed, were placed on the rivers. This flotilla was done away with in 1842, the Euphrates from Basra to Maskana being found, for practical purposes, unnavigable for vessels of their class. One vessel of the flotilla was, however, retained on the Tigris as a ' stationnaire ', or yacht, for the British Political Agency at Baghdad.

[4] Layard (2) and (3). [5] Selby, W. B.

Muhammad Taqi Khan, the great Bakhtiari chieftain, and with the merchants of Shushtar, was enabled to guarantee Persian reciprocity in any such enterprise; and he submitted a report to the British Government, urging the prompt utilization of so favourable an opportunity. Political troubles in Persia prevented the realization of the scheme, and it was not until thirty years later that the opening of the Karun River was made even the subject of formal communications between London and Tehran. A further seventeen years of 'diplomatic fencing' passed before the matter was settled by a decree from the Shah, issued in 1888, by which the lower Karun River, as far as Ahwaz, was (subject to somewhat vexatious conditions) opened to the ships of the world.[1] The achievement, in its three principal aspects—geographical, political, and commercial—is admirably treated by Lord Curzon,[2] who gives a very full bibliography of English writers who have described, from various points of view, the Karun River and its surrounding districts.

The only British firm which took advantage of the concession was the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, whose steamers had already plied for more than a quarter of a century on the Tigris. A subsidy was granted by the Government to enable them to persevere with their enterprise in the face of difficulties. These were very great and varied, and included official obstruction on the part of the Persian Government, an obligation to maintain in the name of the Shah a service which proved unprofitable on the upper Karun, and popular prejudice and fanaticism. The export trade of the Karun region, however, slowly increased, and the service was regularly maintained. In connexion with the development of navigation and trade in Arabistan, a British Vice-Consulate was established at Mohammerah in 1890,[3] and a British Post Office in 1892.

Though the various earlier proposals and schemes for bringing England into direct communication with her Eastern depen-

[1] Prior to the granting of the concession, ascents of the Karun River, by steamer or boat, had been made by Chesney in 1830, Stocqueler 1831, Estcourt in the S.S. *Euphrates* 1836, Selby 1841, and Selby and Layard 1842. In the Anglo-Persian war of 1857, H.M.S. *Comet*, *Planet*, and *Assyria*, under Captain Rennie, with 300 men, and three gunboats in tow, went up as far as Ahwaz. Curzon (2).

[2] Curzon (3).

[3] Raised to the status of a Consulate in 1904, with a Vice-Consulate at Ahwaz: there is now (1927) a Consul at Ahwaz and a Vice-Consul at Mohammerah.

XIX. ISMAINI, ON THE KARUN

dencies by a combination of rail[1] and river transit proved abortive, the need for telegraphic communication, to take the place of the cumbrous ' Desert Mail ' through Iraq, became insistent towards the middle of the nineteenth century. It had been but too clearly demonstrated during the Indian Mutiny how essential to our rule in India such a connexion had become, and the Government at last determined to take the matter seriously in hand. It was at first decided to lay a cable to the East by way of the Red Sea, but after the failure in the working of that cable in 1860, it was difficult to form another private company for a similar enterprise, as the confidence of the public in the practicability of any scheme brought forward was shaken.

The matter was therefore taken up by the Government, and extensive inquiries and surveys pointed to the Persian Gulf as a better alternative course to follow. The Turkish land line from Constantinople to Basra,[2] working in connexion with the European system of telegraphs, extended as far as Baghdad, and by continuing this line to Fao, at the head of the Gulf, and laying a cable thence to Karachi, the East would be brought into direct communication with the West. As the land line from Baghdad to Fao would have to pass through a country inhabited by the Muntafiq Arabs—a tribe then periodically at warfare with the Turkish Government and not over nice in the means they used to show dissatisfaction with their nominal rulers—it was decided to construct a loopline from Baghdad via Kermanshah, Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz to Bushire, connecting at the last-named place with the proposed system of submarine cables in the Gulf. The necessary concession for this line was obtained from the Persian Government after much negotiation.

The detailed history of the successive stages in establishing effective telegraphic communication between Europe and Asia via the Persian Gulf has been described, in all its various aspects, by others,[3] and it must suffice here to summarize what has been

[1] The proposed Euphrates valley railway took shape in 1856–7 and was first propounded by Mr. W. P. Andrews, who had made a special study of railway questions in India, and the scheme is fully expounded in his *Euphrates Valley Route to India*, 1882. A concession granted by the Porte was in the end allowed to lapse from lack of financial guarantee by the British Government.

[2] Begun in 1858 and constructed with the assistance of English officers under Lieut.-Col. Biddulph (q.v. Bibliography).

[3] The reader is referred especially to the following: Curzon (4); Sykes (7); Goldsmid (1) (3); Lardner; Stiffe (2); Biddulph; Schindler (4); Murdoch Smith (2); and to official papers and reports by Possmann, Mallock, and Saldanha.

accomplished. The various conventions and agreements made with Persia from 1863 onwards, and with the Sultan of Muscat from 1864, whereby the necessary concessions were successively obtained, are to be found in Aitchison's *Collection of Treaties*.[1]

The cables and land lines controlled and operated by the Indo-European Telegraph Department in the Persian Gulf, in 1927, were as follows:

(*a*) A cable from Karachi to Jask, opened in 1868; length 528 miles; stations at Karachi and Jask.

(*b*) A two-wire land line from Karachi to Jask; opened from Karachi to Gwadar in 1864 and from Gwadar to Jask in 1869; length 700 miles. There are stations at Karachi, Ormara, Pasni, Gwadar, Chahbar, and Jask.

(*c*) A cable from Jask to Hanjam, opened in 1904; length 136 miles, with stations at Jask and Hanjam. This cable was originally laid in 1869, as part of a direct cable between Jask and Bushire.

(*d*) A cable from Hanjam to Rishahr (Bushire), opened in 1904; length 380 miles; stations at Hanjam and Rishahr. This originally formed part of the direct cable between Jask and Bushire which was laid in 1869. From the Rishahr office, short local land lines run to the British Residency and the Persian Telegraph Office in Bushire Town,[2] and to the Resident's country house at Sabzabad.

(*e*) A cable from Jask to Rishahr direct, opened in 1885; length 520 miles; stations at Jask and Rishahr.

(*f*) A cable from Rishahr to Fao, opened in 1864; length 150 miles; stations at Rishahr and Fao.

(*g*) A cable and land line from Hanjam to Bandar Abbas, crossing Qishm Island, completed in 1905; length of cable 17 miles, and land line 31 miles.

(*h*) A cable from Jask to Muscat, opened in 1901; length 220 miles, with stations at Jask and Muscat.

The physical and other difficulties which had to be overcome in the construction and maintenance of the land lines of telegraph were of no mean order. On the eastern side of the Tigris and Persian Gulf, range after range of mountain running in a generally north-west and south-east direction has to be crossed, before the main plateau is reached; and the tableland itself is intersected by numerous ranges and detached masses. The temperature of the plateau is what one would expect to find under the conditions in the latitude of Persia, viz. hot and dry in the summer, and cold and

[1] Vol. xii. Conventions with Persia: Pt. I, Nos. xix, xx, xxi, xxii, xxiii, xxiv; and Appendices, Persia, Nos. ix, x, xi, xii, and xiii. Conventions with Muscat: Pt. III, Oman, Nos. lxi and lxii.

[2] Rishahr is connected with Tehran, via Shiraz and Isfahan, by a three-wire line.

snowy in the winter. The telegraph crosses several passes at an elevation of 8,000 feet above sea-level, where the cold in winter is excessive and the snow often such as to render all locomotion utterly impossible. There were no carriageable roads, and wheeled vehicles were practically unknown; the roads were merely mule trails. Much of the country passed through was peopled by turbulent and roving tribes, who were apt to regard robbery as a fairly legitimate means of supplying their needs.

The great difficulty experienced in landing the end of the first cable at Fao, owing to the peculiar nature of the shore, is graphically described by Dr. Lardner. He says:

'About five miles of cable, weighing some twenty tons, were distributed among ten of the largest boats belonging to the fleet. When about four miles had been payed out, the boats grounded. Though there was very little water, there was a great depth of mud of about the consistency of cream. There was no use in hesitation, the cable must be landed at any risk; so Sir Charles Bright set an example to his staff and the men, and was the first to get out of the boat and stand up to his waist in the mud; an example which was followed by all the officers and men, upwards of a hundred in number, who were all soon wallowing in the soft yielding slush up to their chests, but still dragging the end of the cable with them. The progress through such a material was necessarily slow—half-swimming, half-wading; it was impossible to rest for a moment without hopelessly sinking below the surface, yet no one thought of abandoning the cable. Though it was only two o'clock when the party left the boats, it was nearly dark before the last reached the shore. All were grimed with mud, and nineteen out of twenty were nearly naked, having left or abandoned almost every article of clothing in the effort to reach the shore.'[1]

Wireless stations have now been established at Hanjam, Bahrain, Bushire, and Lingeh, as well as at Basra and Abadan, and have proved of the greatest value alike to shipping and to the mercantile community.

The Arms Traffic. In the eighties, Britain, having coped more or less successfully after immense effort and sacrifice with piracy and the slave traffic, found herself confronted with another serious problem, viz. the wholesale dissemination of fire-arms among the various peoples of the Gulf littoral. This irregular traffic had very modest beginnings, but with the lapse of time assumed alarming proportions, and for a period overshadowed all other questions in the Gulf. During the third Afghan War of 1879–80, it was discovered that large consignments of percussion caps, exported

[1] Lardner, *The Electric Telegraph.*

from India through Persia, were reaching the Afghan troops at Herat, and a small traffic in arms, in the same direction, was observed. In spite of the checks placed on the issue of arms by the Government of Bombay, and of the fact that, at the instance of the Shah, importation of arms into Persia was prohibited, importations persisted at Mohammerah.[1] In 1883 it was found that a firm at Bushire had also started dealing in arms—in a small way at first—and had made such profits that other houses trading in the Gulf gradually followed suit.[2]

Prohibition in Persia proved ineffective, and the traffic at Bushire grew apace, encouraged by the Persian custom-house authorities, who, though they raised the tax on arms, regarded the trade as no infringement of the law. As a consequence, the tribesmen of Fars and Arabistan were soon armed with better rifles than those of the Persian troops, and, in the words of Sykes, 'the man in the street gave it as his opinion that "Martini Khan" was Shah'. The trade 'was in the main a British trade—the rifles were made in England, the exporting firms were British, the ships that carried the arms were British, and the firms that handled the trade in Persia were British'.[3]

It was clearly impossible and undesirable for the British Government to bring pressure to bear on its own nationals until the Persian Government were themselves ready to make the position clear; such intervention would merely transfer the trade to the Continent, to French or German trading firms, and would increase the diplomatic difficulties of the Persian Government. The British Government realized, better than its critics, the futility of premature regulation, bearing in mind that once the trade was formally prohibited by the Persian Government, the British Government could bring effective pressure to bear on its own subjects without demanding from the Persians, or paying to the firms concerned, any sort of compensation.

By 1897 the traffic at Bushire had reached such dimensions that arms and ammunition to the value of £100,000 were imported. The Persian Government, becoming alarmed, now took effective steps to enforce prohibition, and entered into an agreement with the British and Muscat Governments—where, in the meantime, the trade had also sprung up, no less than 11,500 weapons having been landed between 1890 and 1892—for its suppression.

Though the traffic began later at Muscat than elsewhere, it eventually swelled to far greater proportions, and ultimately centred

[1] By a French trader. [2] Sykes (2). [3] Fraser, L. (4).

there. The Sultan carried out the terms of the agreement he had made with the British in a half-hearted way—he issued an interdict on the export from Muscat to East Africa, but would not consent to the search of Omani vessels, the most effective measure of suppression—and the order remained a dead letter. The trade continued to expand till, in 1897, the number of rifles imported reached the enormous total of 20,000, mostly breech-loaders. Some were disposed of locally to tribesmen from the interior of Oman, but the greater number were re-shipped to Trucial Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and Kuwait, or smuggled into Persian and Turkish territory, whereby the whole region was gradually sown with up-to-date weapons of war.

Serious repressive measures were now instituted.[1] The Persian Government, in 1898, were induced to take more vigorous and effective steps for the suppression of the traffic; and the Sultan of Muscat proclaimed it in the same sense. The Persian Government acted with great decision and made such drastic seizures, principally at Bushire, that the traffic in Persia came practically to an end, except for the small operations of smugglers. British gunboats, sent to cruise in the Gulf, also made wholesale confiscations in various places.

From 1898 onwards, interest in the traffic centred entirely on Muscat, for not only did this port become the local centre of supply of arms and ammunition for Oman, but consignments were re-exported to the Persian coast of Makran and Afghanistan. The trade was for the most part in French hands, with a small German interest, British traders being effectively prevented by their Government from participation. It does not come within the scope of this work to trace the successive steps which were taken, after the close of the nineteenth century, to bring the traffic to an end; but it may be stated that stringent measures were found necessary in 1912, when, after a preliminary proclamation, an Arms Warehouse was established at Muscat, through which all traffic in arms and ammunition, whether for import or export, had to be conducted under direct Government control. The arrangement, though it has not entirely put an end to the trade, put an effective check on it, and the arms traffic is to-day no longer a live issue.

The limitations imposed on the writer by virtue of his long official connexion with the Persian Gulf, make it necessary, at

[1] The tribal risings on the Indo-Afghan frontier suddenly brought the question of the Gulf arms traffic into prominence, the theory being advanced that part at least of the tribal armaments were derived from the Persian Gulf.

all events for the present, here to bring to a conclusion this somewhat lengthy summary of the history of this region. Aristotle says that a drama ends, but an epic poem only leaves off. It is to be feared that the reader may gain, from the conclusion of this work, the impression that the stream of British influence instead of gaining in strength has lost its strength in later years. But, to quote Wordsworth:

> It is not to be thought of that the Flood
> Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
> Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
> Hath flowed, ' with pomp of waters unwithstood ',
> Roused though it be full often to a mood
> Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
> That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
> Should perish; and to evil and to good
> Be lost for ever—

We have maintained order and thereby promoted trade; we have raised the standard of living and thereby encouraged the spread of education: we have thus fostered the growth of individual freedom and of aspiration to succeed in life. This is what we understand as civilization, and what we call progress lies in the changes of structure in the social organism which entail such consequences:[1] a belief in the existence and possibility of progress is our secular creed, and to promote it all over the world is our secular mission.

It was a favourite maxim of Sir J. R. Seeley that history, while it should be scientific in its method, should pursue a practical object. That is, it should not merely gratify the reader's curiosity about the past, but modify his view of the present and his forecast of the future. Now, if this maxim be sound, the history of the growth of British influence in the Persian Gulf ought to end with something that might be called a moral. Some large conclusion ought to arise out of it: it ought to exhibit the general trend of affairs in such a way as to set us thinking about the future, and divining the destiny reserved for the peoples concerned. Of the European nations who have played a prominent part in Persian Gulf politics, England alone has throughout the centuries maintained and improved her position. Some countries which once played a prominent part in these waters, such as Portugal and Holland, have, in a manner, turned their back on their past history, and are developing on different lines.

[1] See, *The Idea of Progress*, J. B. Bury.

Others, such as Germany, Turkey, and Russia, have, at all events for the present, turned their eyes in other directions, and no longer regard the possession of a port on the Persian Gulf as a goal of national strategy. French policy until 1904, when hostile to Great Britain, was merely negative, and was directed to embarrassing us, in order to secure, in due time, ' compensations ' elsewhere. But British influence has steadily grown: it was greater at the commencement of the twentieth century than at any previous time, and emerged from the Great War unshaken and unchallenged.

It is one of the wonders of history that, from this little island, men have gone out not merely to form a number of great, free nations, and to create a dependent empire, but to exercise in many regions—of which the Persian Gulf is only one—a moral influence, often without material backing, which has brought peace to waters which for a thousand years knew no security, and has thereby raised the standard of living in every class. To quote the Christmas Lesson, ' We have multiplied the nations and we have increased their joy.' We have anticipated, in spirit and in fact, in the Persian Gulf more perhaps than anywhere else, those principles to which the mandatory system, under the League of Nations, has given solemn sanction. That we have done so lies not in any exceptional wisdom in British methods of government, but in the fact that the instruments by whom the system is worked have been peculiarly adapted for the business in hand. The British Empire, as remarked by Lord Rosebery, ' rests on men ': hitherto suitable candidates have not been lacking to fill the dozen or so ' political ' posts in the Gulf—*primo avulso non deficit alter, aureus.*

Whether, under the new conditions developing in India, they will continue to come forward is a matter which demands the most serious attention at the hands of the Foreign Office, on whom, on behalf of the British Government, in the ultimate resort, responsibility must rest for the due fulfilment in these waters of the trust which has for convenience been delegated to the Government of India. But that continuity of administration by the right instruments will be assured, by whatever agency, is not, and cannot be, in doubt. In this belief, and remembering the record of those who have laboured in this sphere for three hundred years, we may echo, with a silent prayer, the words of one of the greatest men who ever served the King's Majesty abroad: ' To me the message is carved in granite, it is hewn out of the rock of doom, that our work is righteous and that it shall endure.'

APPENDIX

A SUMMARY OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN THE PERSIAN GULF

'It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of Kings is to search out a matter.' *Prov.* xxv. 2.

THOUGH the Persian Gulf has for three centuries or more been the scene of European and particularly of British enterprise and endeavour, comparatively little has been done to investigate on scientific lines its natural phenomena, and the remains of historic and prehistoric times which abound on its shores.

Our geographical and topographical knowledge, except of the coast line, is largely due to the activities of chance travellers; the highly competent experts of the Government of India have for the most part regarded the Persian Gulf as beyond their scope, and their occasional reports, on matters of scientific interest, when published, are not easily accessible to students.

The writer has endeavoured to summarize below the principal directions in which scientific research in the Persian Gulf has proceeded during the past fifty years, in the hope that some residents in, and visitors to, this region may be encouraged thereby to take up one or more of the fascinating byways of science; no reference is here made to the earlier literature of this region, in which was embodied the learned speculations, and the excursions into fairyland of successive generations of writers, whose critical faculties were not seldom overwhelmed by the romantic atmosphere of the East. Whatever is of permanent value in their speculations has, for the most part, been confirmed by subsequent labourers in the same field, and has been embodied in their published works. It will be seen that there are many persons who have contributed numerous original memoirs, all of them of some, but perhaps none of extraordinary, importance. These men had the capacity of making a striking discovery, though they had not the luck to do so. Their work is valuable and remains, but the worker is forgotten.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

The pioneers in the systematic examination of ancient sites in the Persian Gulf region were Englishmen, of whom the most celebrated were Layard, Rawlinson, and Loftus: between 1836 and 1861, but especially between the years 1845 and 1850, they attacked sites in Assyria, Babylonia, and Susiana. They were, however, very inadequately supported by the British Government, and not at all by the Government of India, and it was not long before their labours were supplemented and finally supplanted by the expeditions of Texier, of Flandin and Coste, of Dieulafoy, and of de Morgan. The researches undertaken by these distinguished *savants*, especially at Persepolis and Susa

(where nothing had been done since the British operations in 1852), have been given to the world in a series of splendid and sumptuously illustrated volumes.

In 1895 a monopoly of antiquarian research in Persia was obtained by France, and operations at Shush were renewed in 1897 by de Morgan. His successors, Maurice Pézard and Count R. de Mecquenem, have also published during the last fifteen years memoirs of importance, dealing respectively with the earliest historical remains at Bushire, and with subsequent developments at Susa, while M. Paul Toscanne of the Louvre has edited a series of valuable monographs on special points arising from the investigations of his French confreres. Dr. Herzfeld, a German archaeologist, in 1924 re-examined Persepolis, and brought to light here, and at a newly discovered site in the Mamasani country sixty miles west-south-west of Shiraz, several important inscriptions. He has subjected to expert examination, for the first time, the early burial caves and rock carvings on Kharag Island, which he has shown to have been occupied by a Christian community as early as the third century A.D. Dr. J. Theodore Bent visited Bahrain in 1889 and commenced excavations in the hope of elucidating the riddle of the vast assemblage of burial mounds there, which he ascribed to the Phoenicians: these had already been reported on by Captain Durand in 1880, and some further excavations were undertaken in 1906–7, at the instance of the Government of India, by Major Prideaux, the Political Agent, but with inconclusive results.[1] Further investigations were made in 1924 by Mr. E. MacKay, no report of which had been published up to 1927.

Dr. Hogarth's *The Penetration of Arabia* summarizes in convenient form what little is known of the archaeology and anthropology of Arabia, and Professor Myres, in the opening chapter of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, has made the most of the very scanty material available, and restated the position in this respect[2] in a series of brilliant generalizations. But, if we except Bushire, Susa, and Persepolis, scarcely a beginning has yet been made in this surely most remunerative field. Oman is still untouched by the excavator: the ancient towns of Sur, Dhufar, and Kalhat, to mention only three, have never been examined by an archaeologist; Gerra, Qais, Siraf, and many other ports have secrets to yield, and whoever ultimately has the privilege of undertaking this task will doubtless reap a rich harvest. A beginning has already been made by Mr. B. S. Thomas, O.B.E., Financial Adviser at Muscat, but he has as yet published nothing.

BOTANY[3]

Our earliest authorities are Pythagoras, Democritus, Theophrastus, and Dioscorides, but excluding these and the incidental references to botanical subjects contained in early printed books, the first serious attempt to collect

[1] The Sepulchral Tumuli of Bahrain—see *Archaeological Report of India*, 1908–9.

[2] Omitting, however, any reference to tumuli at Bahrain.

[3] With acknowledgements to Mr. R. D'O. Good, Brit. Mus. Nat. Hist.

and classify botanical specimens from the Gulf region was made by Aucher Eloy and published in his *Relations de Voyages en Orient de 1830 à 1838* (Paris, 1840). In the same year Antonio Bertoloni published an account of the plants obtained by the Chesney Expedition, in *Miscellanea Botanica*, ii, *Novi Comment. Acad. Sci. Instit. Bonon.*

Major H. A. Sawyer in 1889–91 was at pains to make as complete a collection of plants and shrubs as possible during his journeys in the Bakhtiari country, and the notes of the Curator of the Royal Botanical Society on the collection are printed as an Appendix to his report,[1] which is available for students in the India Office Library. In 1886 O. Stapf had published in *Botanisches Centralblatt*, 1886, xxvii, a paper on 'Vegetationsbilder aus dem Südlichen und Mittleren Persien'.

Some valuable botanical notes were made in 1893 by Leo Hirsch (*Reisen in Süd-Arabien, Mahraland und Hadramaut*, Leiden, 1897), and subsequently, relating to the same area, by Dr. J. Theodore Bent.[2] See also J. G. Baker, 'Botany of the Hadramaut Expedition', *Kew Bulletin*, 1894 and 1895.

Major (now Lt.-Col.) S. G. Knox, Political Agent at Kuwait, made a careful collection of desert shrubs found in the Zor hills in the hinterland of Kuwait. These were examined by H. G. Carter of the Botanical Survey of India, whose report on each specimen, with the Arabic name attached, was published by the Government of India.[3] In the same series (vol. viii, No. 1, 1919) is published *Flora Arabica*, by that well-known authority Father E. Blatter. The student should also see Mrs. Bishop's *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan*. Some further information on this subject is contained in Philby's *Heart of Arabia*, 1922, ii, p. 309, and in an appendix to Floyer's *Unexplored Baluchistan*, 1882; and much of Ainsworth's Botany of the Afghan Boundary Commission, 1887, applies to Persia.[4]

Mesopotamian flora was specially dealt with by Emilio Chiovenda in 'Contributo alla Flora di Mesopotamia', *Malpighia*, xiv, 1900; and Buxton's *Animal Life in Deserts*, 1924, contains some useful information on the distribution and habits of desert plants.

These contributions represent the sum total of our knowledge of the systematic botany of this region, and a fruitful field of research awaits any resident who has the energy to take up this inexpensive and interesting hobby.

ETHNOLOGY

Duhousset (*Études sur les populations de la Perse et pays limitrophes pendant trois années de séjour en Asie*, 1863) and Nicolas de Khanikoff (*Mémoire sur l'Ethnographie de la Perse*, Paris, 1866) are our first and perhaps our best

[1] Report of a Reconnaissance in the Bakhtiari country, South-West Persia, Simla, 1891.

[2] Bent (2).

[3] *Records Botanical Survey of India*, vi, 1912.

[4] *Trans. Linnaean Soc.*, Series ii, vol. iii.

authorities, followed by de Morgan and Tomaschek. The student should also see *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. i.

GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEYS

The geographical surveys executed by the Chesney Expedition and by officers of the Indian Navy in Mesopotamia and Arabistan in the first half of the nineteenth century, combined with the marine surveys between 1820–8 of Brucks and Haines, Constable and Stiffe, and other officers of the Indian Navy along the littoral, which were checked wherever facilities existed for ascertaining longitude by telegraph, formed a useful framework on to which subsequent work was grafted and embodied in successive editions of the standard maps produced by the Survey of India; much original work, however, was lost by the carelessness and indifference alike of the Government of India and of His Majesty's Government. The valuable work of the Turco-Persian Commission in 1850 and the succeeding years never seems to have been incorporated in published maps, no copies having been transmitted to the Government of India by His Majesty's Government; and until after the Persian War in 1856 no serious attempt seems to have been made by the military or survey authorities in India to collate the observations of numerous travellers or to encourage the preparation of reconnaissance reports or the correction of existing maps.

The *Geographical Memoir* of Capt. Macdonald, afterwards Sir J. Macdonald Kinneir, British Minister in Persia, published in 1813 and supplemented later by a further publication,[1] for some time enshrined the corpus of available geographical knowledge of Persia; to these important additions were made by several English or Indian officers, notably Grant, Pottinger, Christie, and Monteith, who, like Kinneir, came to Persia with Sir John Malcolm. In 1840 de Bode filled in some empty spaces in existing maps, though he made no attempt at systematic exploration. Then came Major (afterwards Sir Henry) Rawlinson, whose topographical researches, when employed as an officer in the service of Muhammad Shah, were of outstanding merit and covered very extensive areas in south-west Persia.[2] Sir H. Layard, a not inferior name, also most fortunately devoted to south-west Persia (including Arabistan, Pusht-i-Kuh, and the Lower Bakhtiari country) those gifts of insight and of style that have rendered him famous.

The surveys undertaken by Sir F. Goldsmid in Persia in connexion with telegraphs, and the settlement of the Perso-Baluch frontier, between 1870–2, also resulted in a very considerable addition[3] to our knowledge of Persian conditions and of the geography of south-east Persia and the Persian Gulf. The construction of a telegraph line from Bushire via Tehran to Khanikin by the British Government in agreement with the Persian Government, resulted

[1] Kinneir (2).

[2] Notably his 'Notes on a March from Zohab . . . to Khuzistan (Susiana)'. (1) Bibliog.

[3] Goldsmid (3); a well-written and well-illustrated book which deserves to be much better known.

in a number of detailed surveys between 1860 and 1862 by officials[1] of the Telegraph Administration under the orders of Lt.-Col. Patrick Stewart and Major Bateman Champain.[2] In 1863 a telegraph line was constructed from Karachi, through the states of Kalat and Las Bela, to Gwadur, and subsequently to Jask. The surveys for these lines, and the telegraphic determination of longitudes at various points covered south and central Persia with a network of route surveys punctuated by accurately determined points, and resulted in the publication in 1873–4 of Capt. O. B. C. St. John's Map of Persia, 16 m. = 1 inch, in six sheets, 'compiled principally from original authorities, by order of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India', one of the most valuable maps of Persia ever made. St. John joined Lt.-Col. P. Stewart's expedition to Persia in 1863. His own duties lay in the Persian section, and he was in charge of the last telegraphic division, which was, at the same time, the most important and the most difficult. Later, he superintended the construction of the line from Tehran to Bushire. In 1871 he went to Baluchistan as Boundary Commissioner of the Perso-Kalat frontier, and completed the survey of that boundary. On his return to England he was employed at the India Office, during 1873 and 1874, in compiling this great map of Persia and Persian Baluchistan. The map was based on longitudes of the principal Persian telegraph stations, fixed in co-operation with General Walker of the Indian trigonometrical survey, Capt. W. H. Pierson, R.E., and Lieut. Stiffe of the Indian Navy, by whom time-signals were exchanged between Greenwich and Karachi on the one hand, and stations in Persia on the other.

Twenty years later, officials in the Persian Gulf were encouraged by Lord Curzon to undertake a series of investigations along the Persian Gulf littoral. The late Mr. J. G. Lorimer made extended investigations along the Arabian littoral: Capt. (now Sir P. Z.) Cox, who in 1901 and 1902 had made important additions to our knowledge of Oman,[3] examined the Persian littoral from Dilam to Qubban in 1905, and, in Oman, travelled by land from Ras al Khaima to Sohar via Baraimi, a route which had been traversed in the opposite direction and sketched by Capt. Hamerton in 1840.[4] In the same year Capt. (now Lt.-Col.) S. G. Knox visited Hafar, a famous landmark in the interior, distant 160 miles from Kuwait, which, though mentioned by previous European travellers in Arabia, had not been reached by any of them. In

[1] An outstanding example is E. A. Floyer of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, whose book, *Unexplored Baluchistan* (1882), is still a useful work of reference though he travelled in 1876–7.

[2] The late Sir Henry Mance, who died at Oxford in April 1926, was the inventor of the heliograph: as a young man he was employed by the I.E.T.D. in the Persian Gulf, where the soldiers of Alexander the Great are said to have signalled by flashing the sun from their shields. It was in developing this idea that he invented the heliograph.

[3] Cox, P.Z. (1), (2).

[4] See marginal note to 'Map of Maritime Arabia', and *Bombay Selections*, xxiv, 1856.

this field he was brilliantly followed by the late Capt. W. H. I. Shakespear, the late Lt.-Col. Leachman, the late Miss Gertrude Bell, Lt.-Col. Burton, the Danish traveller Raunkaier. Capt. (now Lt.-Col.) Lorimer made a number of most productive journeys in Arabistan, which were extended in subsequent years to Pusht-i-Kuh and Luristan and the Bakhtiari country.

The latter tract, which, with the possible exception of the Aoraman Range of Central Kurdistan, is the most lofty and inaccessible part of the great Zagros chain, had been very thoroughly explored in 1889 by Major H. A. Sawyer of the Bengal Staff Corps, assisted by Indian surveyors: his maps and reports, though amplified in places by subsequent explorers, notably by McSwiney (1891) in the south, Lorimer (1903–8), Ranking (1909–11), and Noel (1915–17), will long remain classic authorities.

The explorations of Major (now Sir P.) Sykes are too well known to require detailed reference here: they were supplemented under his instructions, during the war, by several valuable detailed surveys, especially in Fars.

We must not omit to mention the valuable and varied information on geographical and scientific topics collected by de Morgan and published in 1895.[1] In this work, attention was for the first time prominently drawn to the *bande pétrolifère* stretching south-east from Kirkuk, in which he considered might be found the most important source of wealth throughout the whole region; and the possibility of a pipe-line from Khanikin to the Mediterranean was for the first time mooted, as also the proposal for a Baghdad–Tehran railway. Had de Morgan followed up his views on this matter in south-west Persia, the history of the oil industry might have been different.

The fruits of the labours of these and of many other travellers, official and unofficial, were embodied by the Survey of India in a succession of standard sheet-maps, first on the 8 m. = 1 inch scale (and later in $\frac{1}{4}$-inch sheets), a complete series of which, covering the whole of Persia, now exists, and is constantly, though all too slowly, under revision. For general purposes, the Survey of India have published at intervals since 1875 successive editions of St. John's map referred to above, which has now been replaced by the corresponding sheets of 'the International Series' on the scale of 1 million, and by sheets on the $\frac{1}{2}$-million scale. The 1-million sheets, covering the northern part of the Arabian peninsula, embody in addition the vast mass of material gleaned previous to 1910 from native information,[2] to which most important accessions have since been made by the late Lt.-Col. Leachman, the late Capt. Shakespear, Philby, Cheesman, and others, and since the Armistice, between Baghdad and Jerusalem and Damascus, by the devoted labours of Major A. E. Holt of the Iraq Railways.

It may fairly be said that in the matter of maps, no part of the world, not forming part of the British Empire, has been better served by British topographers, but the gaps in our knowledge of local geography are still many and serious. Oman is still to a great extent unknown; the immediate hinter-

[1] Morgan, J. J. M. de (1), &c.

[2] Including the work of Huber, Wallin, Palgrave, Doughty, &c.

land of the Trucial Oman has never been explored; Musandam has not yet yielded all its secrets; we still await a survey of the Hasa littoral. On the Persian side of the Gulf, not only are there still some blank spaces to be filled, notably in the Kuhgilu Hills and the Mamasani and Boir Ahmadi country, but the value of existing maps is diminished by the conditions under which they were compiled, and from the absence of a proper system of triangulation, so that in many cases they cannot be relied on off the main routes. Had the money which has been devoted from time to time to particular surveys and to the extended journeys of individual consular and military officials been spent on a well-thought-out survey programme, covering a period of say twenty years, we should have by this time a complete and accurate survey of both sides of the Gulf on the $\frac{1}{4}$-inch scale, in the light of which much that has been written on the subject of roads and railways in Persia would have to be reconstructed.

The immense amount of fruitless discussion, time, and money that has been lavished in connexion with the Perso-Baluch and Turco-Persian frontiers would also have been saved, and the British, Russian, and neutral zones of 1907 would, in the light of fuller geographical knowledge, perhaps have been more intelligently drawn, to the advantage of international peace and friendly relations.

MARINE AND RIVER SURVEYS

Charts of a kind, for the guidance of vessels in the Gulf, already existed in 1785, and these Lieut. John McCluer, a self-taught surveyor of the East India Company's Marine, had devoted himself assiduously to correcting during a period of three years' service in the Gulf. The result of his voluntary labours was a chart of the whole north-eastern side of the Gulf and of the Shatt al Arab up to Basra, accompanied by a memoir, besides plans of the harbours of Muscat, Basra, and other coast towns.[1]

The south-western or Arabian shores of the Gulf, however, remained practically unknown; and in 1810, when giving the commanders of the British Expedition against the Jawasmi pirates detailed instructions for the visitation of their ports, the only map which the Government of India could supply was a 'topographical sketch' by one Sayyid Taqi, showing only roughly the positions of eight or nine places to the south-west of Ras al Khaima.

[1] A writer reviewing in 1829 the hydrographical work of McCluer, says: 'When the works of an individual are carefully preserved and consulted as a standard authority by those who survive him, it is a sufficient proof of their excellence. . . . Those of Lieut. McCluer have stood the test of nearly forty years; the considerable addition they formed to the stock of hydrographical information, justly entitled their author to the acknowledgements of the maritime world; and at this distance of time we readily bestow our tribute to the memory of a man who has perpetuated his name by his valuable works. His first essay in the Persian Gulf, which alone proceeded from a desire of benefiting navigation, was a fair promise of the zeal which he afterwards displayed in the survey of the coast of Hindostan.'

In 1811 a surveying officer was placed on board the East India Company's cruiser *Benares* in the Persian Gulf, but systematic operations were impossible. Towards the end of 1815, orders for a regular survey were issued by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, but danger from pirates made their execution impracticable.

In 1817 a memoir on the ports and pearl banks of Bahrain, together with surveys, was prepared by Lieut. Tanner of the Bombay Marine; but it was not until 1820, on the conclusion of the third expedition against the Jawasmi, that a proper survey of the south and west waters of the Gulf, beginning at Ras Musandam, was undertaken by Capt. P. Maughan in the *Discovery*, assisted by Lieut. J. M. Guy in the *Psyche*. Lieut. Guy succeeded to the direction of this survey in November 1821, and he had carried his operations as far as the promontory of Qatar when, in 1823, his place was taken by Lieut. G. B. Brucks. Brucks completed the survey of the Arabian coast, which occupied him until 1825, and early in 1826 he began work on the Persian coast and islands, to which the following ten years were devoted. In 1828 operations were begun under his command in the Gulf of Oman, and were continued by Lieut. S. B. Haines, who finished the Makran coast to Karachi in 1829: the Oman side had previously been completed down the Muscat. The first marine survey of the Persian Gulf, partly from the smallness of the vessels employed, was a most arduous and painful service, and a lamentably large proportion of the officers engaged on it either died or broke down in health from the effects of climate and hardship.

In 1835 an expedition under Col. F. R. Chesney left England for Turkish Arabia to make an experiment in the direction of introducing steam navigation upon the Euphrates. Two river steamers were launched upon the Upper Euphrates in the course of 1835–6; but one, the *Tigris*, was unfortunately wrecked in a storm within a few weeks: the remaining vessel, the *Euphrates*, navigated on the rivers Euphrates, Shatt al Arab, and Tigris, and detailed surveys were made; but in December 1836 the expedition was broken up, and the *Euphrates* was transferred from the British Government to the East India Company. Col. Chesney's surveys of the Euphrates, Tigris, and Karun mark an important step in geographical progress: his chart of the Shatt al Arab, from Basra to the bar of the Shatt, is of particular interest, as showing the changes that have taken place during the last hundred years in this locality.

The surveys initiated by the Chesney Expedition were continued with great energy for more than twenty years, and extended to Arabistan and elsewhere, and to the confines of Persia with Iraq.

Commander Lynch (1837–43) surveyed the Tigris from Mosul to Ctesiphon, the Euphrates below Masharra, and connected Niniveh, Baghdad, Ctesiphon, and Babylon by triangulation. Lieut. Campbell (1841–2) surveyed the Tigris below Baghdad; Commander Felix Jones (1843–54) surveyed Zohab, the old Nahrwan Canal, the old course of the Tigris above Baghdad, and the Persian hills from Baghdad to Mosul. He also made a survey of the country from Musaiyib to Najaf the material of which was lost in the India Office, as also was that of surveys by Commander Selby from

Babylon to Samawa (1841–2 and 1856–61); a valuable chart of the Shatt al Arab from Basra to the sea, by Commander Jones and Lieut. Collingwood, met with a similar fate. Selby also surveyed the Karun River, with its branches and affluents.

A survey of the south-east coast of Arabia, begun by Capt. Haines in 1833, was discontinued in 1837 owing to the exigencies of the service; and from 1839 to 1844, in consequence of the war in Afghanistan and want of money for general purposes, marine surveys by the Indian Navy were almost entirely in abeyance. In 1839 however, perhaps in connexion with the occupation of Kharag, a report on the harbour of Kuwait was made by an officer of the Indian Navy. The survey of the south-east coast of Arabia was resumed in 1844 and completed in 1848. In 1857, it having been decided to revise the Persian Gulf survey of 1820–8, in which errors and omissions were known to exist, Capt. C. Constable, assisted by Lieut. A. W. Stiffe, was appointed to carry out the work. They completed it in 1860, and the result of their labours was a general chart of the Persian Gulf in two sheets, of which the essential features were reliable, but which Constable himself described in 1862 as not being on nearly large enough a scale. Meanwhile a survey of the harbour of Bahrain was made by Lieut. Whish, I.N., in 1859.

At the end of 1862 the vessels of the Indian Navy in the Persian Gulf were recalled to India. On 30 April 1863 the Indian Navy ceased to exist. It was understood at the time of the change that the duties performed by the ships of the Indian Navy would devolve in future on those of the Royal Navy; but some years elapsed before a practical method of working with the substituted force was devised, and in the interval British political interests suffered severely in the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and elsewhere.

For ten years no fresh surveys were undertaken, and many original drawings and memoirs, the fruit of expensive surveys, were lost. In 1871 the Government of Bombay, realizing the necessity for new surveys, consulted Col. Pelly, and after a general discussion of the subject Mr. Girdlestone, formerly a midshipman in the Indian Navy, was deputed from 1871 to 1874 to make a survey of Bahrain and Qatar waters: the survey was extended towards the mainland, not without some opposition on the part of local Turkish authorities, which was however over-ruled. In 1876 the inlet of Khor al Hajar on the coast of Oman was surveyed, and in 1886 the inlet of Khor Bani Bu Ali was discovered. In 1888 the Bahmishir was partially examined in connexion with the opening of the Karun River to navigation in the same year.

In 1890 the approaches of the Shatt al Arab and Bahmishir from the sea were surveyed by British vessels; with the assent of the Persian Government the Bahmishir was examined and sketched in the same year and its impracticability for ocean steamers demonstrated. By permission of the Shah and of the Sultan of Oman, British tidal observation stations were established at Bushire and Muscat in 1892 and 1893, and in 1894 telegraphic observations were undertaken at the Bushire and Jask telegraph stations with a view to the determination of the longitude.

In 1901 a fresh survey of the approaches to Bahrain and the Manama harbour was made. These isolated surveys were, however, of little practical value, and it was not until Lord Curzon's viceroyalty that any active steps were taken to continue and extend the surveys of the old Indian Navy: thirty valuable years had been lost. Bushire harbour was re-surveyed in 1903, with the consent of the Persian Government, though they intimated that, whatever the result of the investigations, they would neither deepen the harbour themselves nor permit it to be deepened by the Government of India. The soundings showed that the deepening of the inner anchorage and the approach to it for ships of heavy draught would be of little use so long as the bar of the Shatt al Arab continued to regulate the size of vessels navigating the Gulf; but that the dredging of a channel for vessels of moderate size from the inner anchorage to the wharves on Khor Sultani would be an advantageous and not a difficult operation. In 1904 Kuwait harbour was re-surveyed, the work not being completed until 1907, and again not without strong protests from the Turkish Government. In 1904–5 H.M.S. *Redbreast* made a detailed examination of Khor at Qalaiya, in Bahrain Island, which it was hoped might afford harbour facilities superior to those of the exposed anchorage off Manama: the conclusion, however, was against the scheme.

In 1905–6 R.I.M.S. *Investigator* was employed in the Gulf, and completed the surveys of the approaches of the Shatt al Arab and the port of Kuwait. In 1906 the Marine Survey of India carried out surveys of the Khor Abdallah and of the Khor Zubair from its source.

From this date until 1910 no surveys were undertaken in the Gulf, but at the end of this year R.I.M.S. *Palinurus* was recalled from her survey work on the west coast of India and dispatched to re-survey the mouths of the Shatt al Arab. Again the Turkish authorities placed every obstacle in the way, refusing permission to land a party at Fao for observations of the rise and fall of the tides, and they cut adrift the moored beacon buoys that were used.

Then, until the World War, 1914, the *Palinurus* was employed continuously in the Gulf, and completed the following surveys:

1911–12. The approaches to the Shatt al Arab, as far as Kubbar Island.

1912–13. The approaches to Bahrain harbour; a plan of Bandar Abbas, and of Hanjam Sound.

1914. Clarence Straits.

During the World War several surveys of various parts of the Shatt al Arab were completed by the survey officers of the Royal Indian Marine; and in 1921–2 the *Palinurus* was again employed in the Persian Gulf, but mostly in small investigations.

GEOLOGY

The paucity of the bibliography appended to Pilgrim's Memoir [1] is a measure of the interest taken in the application to the Persian Gulf of this branch of science until the beginning of the present century.

[1] Pilgrim, G. E. (1).

From 1855, when Loftus [1] first published his valuable paper, little, if anything, of value on this subject was published (except by de Morgan) till 1904, when Lord Curzon sent Dr. G. E. Pilgrim of the Indian Geological Department to the Gulf. He made a general geological reconnaissance of both coasts, combined with a closer examination of localities where the existence of minerals was suspected: some coal seams in the country behind Sur in Oman had previously been scientifically examined by Doctors von Krafft and Oldham of the same department.

Since the appearance of Pilgrim's first report there have been further reports by him, viz.: *The Sulphur Deposits of S. Persia*, and *The Geology of parts of the Persian provinces of Fars, Kirman, &c.*[2] Between 1901 and the present day, however, an immense amount of work has been done by the geologists of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, some of the results of which are embodied in Mr. Richardson's paper of 1924 and in other as yet unpublished reports. A careful inquiry, with negative results, was also made in 1920 by an expert on behalf of the Persian Mining Syndicate, regarding the copper mines of Kirman. But the geology of the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman is little, if at all, better known than fifty years ago, and the hinterland is still virtually a sealed book.

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[1] W. K. Loftus, appointed to succeed Mr. Angus as Naturalist and Geologist, left England to join the Turco-Persian Frontier Commission under Lt.-Col. Williams in January 1849.

[2] See *Rec. Geol. Survey India*, 1922, and *Mem. Geol. Survey India*, 1924.

[3] With acknowledgements to Mr. N. Campbell Smith, M.C., Brit. Mus. Nat. Hist. Sec.

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MEDICAL

There is a very notable lack of published information on medical subjects relating to this region. The only recent technical articles on the subject are by Dr. Sir W. Willcox, in the 12th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* under the heading 'Persian Gulf'; and three most valuable articles by Dr. Neligan, Physician to the British Legation at Tehran, in the *Lancet* for March 20, March 27, and April 3, 1926, who has also written a compendium under the title *Hints for Residents and Travellers in Persia* (1914). Epidemics and sanitary organization in this region have, however, received a great deal of attention. The general history of plague and cholera is given in the appropriate articles of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica.* Notices of early epidemics of plague will be found in an official précis, *The First Connection of the Hon. E.I. Coy. with Turkish Arabia,* Calcutta, 1874; and an article, 'Notes on Cholera in Persia', by Surgeon-Major T. Ffrench Mullen in the Persian Gulf Administration Report for 1889–90 has a wider scope than its name suggests, and gives a general account of the movements of cholera, especially in Western Asia, since 1821. The outbreak of cholera in Oman, in

1899, is discussed in Lt.-Col. A. S. G. Jayakar's *Report on the Recent Epidemic of Cholera in Maskat and Matrah*—in the Persian Gulf Administration Report for 1899–1900.

The general practice of medicine by European doctors in Persia is discussed by Mrs. Bishop in *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan*, 1891; by E. Treacher Collins in *In the Kingdom of the Shah*, 1896; by Dr. C. J. Wills in *In the Land of the Lion and the Sun*, 1883; and numerous further references thereto are to be found in current literature, particularly Mrs. C. Colliver Rice's *Persian Women and their Ways*, 1923. See also 'A chapter from the History of Cannabis Indica', by E. G. Browne, in *St. Bart.'s Hosp. J.*, 1897, March, and 'The Opium Trade through Persian Spectacles', by A. T. Wilson, *Asiat. Rev.*, 1925, April.

The subject of medical missions is treated by the Rev. S. M. Zwemer, and by Harrison.[1]

METEOROLOGY

The literature on this subject is very extensive: early travellers of every nationality vied with each other in picturesque denunciations of the climate of the Persian Gulf, and more particularly of Muscat, Bandar Abbas, Hormuz, and Bushire—Arab and Persian writers being no whit less intemperate than Europeans in their allusions to the subject. Prevailing winds were more carefully studied and accurately described, and the potentialities of various ports as sources of fresh water were better known in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries than they are to-day. Generations of British consular and telegraph officials have derived a dismal satisfaction from their self-imposed task of taking daily thermometer readings, and submitting periodical reports on the subject to a 'higher authority' more fortunately situated in Whitehall or on a Himalayan hill-top. These statistics have been regularly tabulated and embodied in annual reports, books of travel, and the like, and occur with monotonous regularity in the form of appendices to every official report dealing with the area. But these dry bones tell us little: the wet-bulb temperature alone affords any real indication of the probable degree of discomfort that will be experienced by a European at any particular place and time, and such records have not as a rule been kept so carefully, nor are they so reliable as the dry-bulb figures.

Apart from such statistical information, the chief recent sources of information are as follows:

(1) *The Persian Gulf Pilot.* 1924.

(2) *The Annual Summaries of the Meteorological Department of the Government of India.*

(3) An article, *Climatology of Southern and Western Asia*, by W. L. Dallas, of the Meteorological Department of the Government of India, in the proceedings of the Chicago Congress of August, 1893, Meteorological Section, pp. 672–86.

[1] Zwemer, S. M. (1); Harrison, P. W.

(4) A lecture on *Weather and Warfare* delivered by the same authority before the United Service Instn. of India (*vide* Journal for Oct., 1904).

(5) *The Weather of Iraq*—a comprehensive non-technical memorandum by Mr. Norman of the same Department, whilst on active service in Mesopotamia.

(6) *Notes on Climate and other subjects in Eastern Mediterranean* and *adjacent countries.* I.D. 1117. (Prepared on behalf of the Admiralty and War Office. Including statistics of Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf.)

Mention must also be made of two valuable papers published in German by G. Schott.[1]

It is sad to reflect that with all this information at their disposal, in addition to a vast mass of official literature on the subject accumulated by military and civil officials during the last hundred years, the military authorities in India on the outbreak of the World War declared themselves ignorant of the climatic conditions at the head of the Gulf, and proceeded to display an ineptitude in the provision of clothing, medical and hospital equipment, and food which, though it brought disgrace and dismissal to no individual, involved tens of thousands in untold miseries, brought death to thousands, and did more than is even yet realized to damage the good name of the Government of India at home and abroad. British officials are in no way inferior to Germans in the systematic collection and transmission of information; our national weakness lies in the reluctance shown at head-quarters—whether in Whitehall, or Simla, or elsewhere—to retain the small additional staff necessary to collate and compile the information that reaches the central administrations, and to the general tendency to trust to hasty improvisations and to ignore or belittle the value of expert testimony and scientific investigation.

MUSIC

Floyer, in his *Unexplored Baluchistan*, 1882, Appendix E, and Rivadeneyra, in his *Viaje al interior de Persia*, 1880, vol. ii, p. 265, make some brief references to Baluch and Lur harmonies respectively, and give some musical scores; there are also several reproductions in European notation of Persian harmonies in *Popular Poetry of Persia*, translated by A. Chodzko, 1842. References to Persian music and musical instruments, of much interest, are also to be found in many works, notably those of Chardin, Le Bruyn, Niebuhr, Ouseley, Jourdain,[2] and Waring and Shoberl.[3] Probably the only detailed work on the subject of European music in the Persian language is the *Dustur-i-Tar*, a treatise on the banjo and guitar, by Col. Ali Naqi Khan Waziri.

[1] Schott, G. (1) (2).

[2] *La Perse, ou tableau de l'histoire, du gouvernement,* &c., 1814.

[3] Shoberl, A. (editor), *The World in Miniature*, 3 vols.

PHILOLOGY

The dialects of Arabic and Persian spoken on the Persian Gulf littoral differ considerably from the parent tongues as spoken to-day on the plateaux of Arabia and Persia respectively. Each dialect, as is to be expected, owes much to the other: both have incorporated certain words of foreign origin which reflect the history of the Gulf and its use as a highway from earliest times; but excluding these words, none of which except a few words borrowed from the language of the western littoral of India are peculiar to the Gulf, there remains, it appears, a residuum of words mainly relating to ships and to the practice of navigation which are neither Arabic nor Avestic in origin and which are common to both sides of the Gulf. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that these words may prove to be of Sumerian origin: in any case, expert inquiry into this department of science might be of assistance to archaeologists and anthropologists alike. In 1889 Surgeon-Major Jayakar published some notes on the Omani dialect of Arabic, in the *J.R.A.S.*[1] Lt.-Col. D. L. R. Lorimer gave us, in 1922, a scholarly survey of the Kirmani dialect and Bakhtiari dialects;[2] Major Phillott has published an amusing series of proverbs current at Kirman; and Lt.-Col. and Mrs. Lorimer have laid the children of England under an abiding obligation by the publication, in 1919, of a charming volume of *Persian Tales*, still current among the common people in south Persia. The works of the late Prof. E. G. Browne are not less indispensable to those who live in south Persia than to those who live in the north. The Rev. J. Van Ess wrote, for the use of the Army in Mesopotamia during the war, a careful summary of the *Spoken Arabic of Mesopotamia*, supplemented two years later by a more ambitious, but not less useful, work on *Written Arabic*. Finally, reference must be made to the monograph on the Baluch language, spoken along the Makran coast, which is included in vol. x of the *Linguistic Survey of India*, by Sir G. A. Grierson.

TERRESTRIAL MAGNETISM

In this field of research it has fallen to the United States to lead the way. One of the main objects to which the energies of the Department of Research in Terrestrial Magnetism, of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, have been devoted since 1904, has been a general magnetic survey of the globe. This survey has now been completed for the major part of the earth, and the results are being published in a series of voluminous reports under the title *Land and Ocean Magnetic Observations*, covering the period from 1905 to 1921. Four volumes had (1924) already been issued, and a fifth and final volume to be entitled *Ocean Magnetic Observations, 1915–21, and Special Reports*, was in course of preparation. With the completion of vol. v it will be possible to undertake the reduction of the accumulated data since 1905 to a common datum for the construction of new world magnetic

[1] Jayakar, A. S. G. (1) (2).

[2] *The Phonology of the Bakhtiari*, &c., dialects. (Roy. Asiat. Soc. Prize Publication).

charts, and to make a new analysis of the earth's magnetic field on a basis of more complete and more accurate data than hitherto available.

The researches of the Department were confined, in the main, to the oceans, and to those countries or regions where magnetic data would not otherwise be obtainable; and in some regions the magnetic surveys were accomplished in co-operation with existing organizations or with interested investigators. In Asia the observers obtained magnetic data in every state excepting Afghanistan, the Himalaya States, and Chosen. The Persian Gulf region itself (including the territories of Persia, Iraq, and Arabia—which formed but a small section of the field of operations in Asia) was fortunate in falling under the detailed scrutiny of the observers. Observation stations were established, between the years 1905 and 1910, at a great number of places, well distributed over the whole area. On the Persian side observations were made at Tehran, Hamadan, Kermanshah, Shushtar, Ahwaz, Mohammerah, Shiraz, Bushire, Lingeh, Jask, besides some thirty or more other places; in the Euphrates–Tigris area, at Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra among other places; and in Arabia at Kuwait, Bahrain Island, Aden, and Maan. Volume i of the report includes a valuable description of each of the stations and the conditions under which the magnetic observations were made, and indicates in most cases the precise spot at which operations took place, thus making it comparatively easy for further investigations at these places. Volume iv gives detailed information of much value regarding the methods used by the observers. The volumes issued have the following titles : [1]

Researches of the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, of the Carnegie Institution of Washington :

Vol. i. *Land Magnetic Observations*, 1905–10.
Vol. ii. *Land Magnetic Observations*, 1911–13, and *Report on Special Researches.*
Vol. iii. *Ocean Magnetic Observations*, 1905–16, and *Report on Special Researches.*
Vol. iv. *Land Magnetic Observations*, 1914–20.
Vol. v. *Ocean Magnetic Observations*, 1915–21, and *Special Reports.*

ZOOLOGY

(*a*) *Mammals, Birds, Reptiles, Insects.*

Ainsworth, who accompanied the Chesney Expedition, already referred to, furnished Col. Chesney with reports on the natural history of the region traversed, including mammals, birds, reptiles, and fishes, which were in due course published.[2]

W. T. Blandford, who accompanied Sir F. Goldsmid's Mission in

[1] All volumes quoted are to be seen at the following libraries in London: British Library of Political Science; Library of the Royal Society; Library of the Science Museum; University College Library; University of London Library; Institute of Petroleum Technologists.

[2] Chesney, F. R. (1), vol. ii. Appendices, ii–vi.

south-east Persia, contributed to the memoirs, in 1876, a supplementary volume in which his own extensive researches into the fauna of south-east Persia were collated, with all material then available regarding the fauna of Persia generally. In 1905, and again in 1911, two British naturalists, the late Col. Bailward and Mr. Woosnam, travelled in Arabistan and made extensive collections of birds and small mammals. Sir P. Z. Cox, in the course of a long and distinguished career in the Persian Gulf, extending over nearly thirty years, found time to devote some attention to zoology: the pages of the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* and the collections in the South Kensington Museum bear witness to the keen scientific interest he took in the subject. It was largely owing to his foresight that, after the war, the Society published a collection of monographs[1] of exceptional value on the fauna of Iraq, its butterflies, moths, beetles, and innumerable insect pests. These memoirs, whilst dealing primarily with Iraq, apply in large measure to the Persian Gulf region, which is inhabited or visited largely by the same species as Iraq. To his initiative the London Zoological Gardens owe a fine specimen of oryx,[2] presented to H.M. The King by Ibn Saud, and a pair of ostriches from Central Arabia, the first specimens of this bird to reach Europe alive. To Sir P. Z. Cox also we are indebted for the recent important accessions to our knowledge of the birds and mammals of the Persian Gulf and Central Arabia, collected on his behalf during 1922–4 by his Secretary, Capt. Cheesman. As a result of these researches our knowledge of the zoology of the Gulf region is more complete and accurate than any other branch of science.

The upshot of these investigations is to demonstrate that south Persia and the Persian Gulf region are inhabited by animals which show, in every group, far closer affinity to European than to Indian forms: the Perso-Baluch frontier, or the Sind desert east of it, thus constitutes a line of demarcation which is both ethnological and zoological.

Additional Bibliography:[3]

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A new race of Hare from the Persian Frontier of Mesopotamia. *Records of the Indian Museum*, xv. 49.

[1] *A Survey of the Fauna of Iraq.* Dulau & Co., 1922.

[2] It is generally supposed that unicorns, which Varthema saw at Mecca in 1503 and which he described in great detail, were anomalous specimens of the oryx: on the other hand, the figure of the unicorn, as depicted in several places at Persepolis, is referred to by Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* viii. 21) and in the Bible; whilst in more recent times, Don Juan Gabriel, a Portuguese colonel, who lived several years in Abyssinia, claimed that he had actually seen it, and his account was confirmed by a Portuguese missionary who was then living in Abyssinia; it was also reported from the Cape of Good Hope in 1792 (see Varthema's *Travels*, Hakluyt Soc., 1863, and Renaudot's *Ancient Accounts of India and China*, 1733, pp. xxv, 17 and 61).

[3] With acknowledgements to Capt. R. E. Cheesman.

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—— Five new Mammals from Arabia and Persia. *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 1902, Ser. 7, vol. x, Dec.

—— On a collection of Mammals from Persia and Armenia presented to the Brit. Museum, by Col. A. C. Bailward. *Proc. Zool. Soc.*, 1905, vol. ii, No. xxxv, p. 519.

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Birds.

A list of papers on birds in the Gulf region follows Ticehurst's Birds of Mesopotamia, in *A Survey of Iraq Fauna*. The following are additional papers :

Ludlow, F. Notes on the Bird Life of Ahwaz, Persia. *J. Bomb. Nat. Hist. Soc.*, xxv. 303.

Sharpe, R. B. On a collection of Birds from the vicinity of Muscat. Made by Col. Miles. *Ibid.*, 1886, p. 162.

Whittaker, J. S. On two species of Passerine Birds (Cumming's Chat). *Ibid.*, 1902, p. 58.

Filippi, F. de. *Un viaggio in Persia nel 1862.* Milan, 1865.

Butler. 'Astola. A summer cruise in the Gulf of Oman.' *Stray Feathers*, 1877, p. 283.

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Houtum-Schindler, A. *Eastern Persian Irak.* 1896.

Reptiles.

Description of a new sand boa from the Persian Gulf (Kuwait). *Records of the Indian Museum*, ix. 217.

Insects.

Description of two new species of Diptera from Seistan, East Persia. *Records of the Indian Museum*, xvi. 299.

(b) Fish and Fisheries.

The best recent general authority on this subject is Miles.[1] Other sources of information are articles in the *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* as follows :

Boulenger, G. A. Vol. xiv, 1901. On Some Deep Sea Fishes collected by Mr. F. W. Townsend in the Sea of Oman. (In the same volume is an interesting note regarding Sword Fishes striking a ship (Muscat).)

[1] Miles, S. B. (6).

Lane, W. H. Vol. xxiv (4) and xxv (1), 1916–17. The Game Fishes of the Persian Gulf.

For detailed zoological information regarding marine fishes, consult *A Bibliography of Fishes*, by Bashford Dean, published by the American Museum of Natural History; and, in particular, works by Annandale; Boulenger; Day (*The Fishes of Zanzibar, with illustrations.* 1866); and Regan.

The war gave birth to a crop of fishermen's stories of great carp in Mesopotamia, which appeared in the *J. Bomb. Nat. Hist. Soc.*, 1918–20, vols. xxv, xxvi, xxvii.

For details of sea-snakes in the Persian Gulf, see *Ibid.*, 1924, vol. xxx, p. 174.

On the general question of Persian Gulf fisheries, the most authoritative source is still Dr. McIvor's report in the Persian Gulf Political Residency Administration Report for 1880–1, entitled *Notes on Sea Fishing in the Persian Gulf.*

Further information regarding the fresh-water fish of Iraq is contained in Cuinet's *La Turquie d'Asie*, 1894, vol. ii.

Other papers are :

Annandale. An enemy of certain Pearl Oysters in the Persian Gulf. *Records of the Indian Museum*, i. 176. (This gives the names of three varieties of Persian Gulf Pearl Oyster.)

Jenkins, J. T. Notes on Fish from India and Persia, with descriptions of new species.

On a collection of Fishes made by W. T. Blandford in 1872, in Persia and Baluchistan. *Records of the Indian Museum*, v. 123.

Report on the Aquatic Fauna of the Seistan, with subsidiary studies. (Fish—mollusca—birds, &c.) *Ibid.*, vol. xviii.

Pelly, L. Remarks on the Oyster Beds in the Persian Gulf. *J. Bomb. Br. R. A. S.*, 1868, xviii.

Boulenger, G. A. An account of the fishes obtained by Surgeon-Major A. S. G. Jayakar at Muscat, east coast of Arabia. *Proc. Zool. Soc.*, 1887, pp. 653–67.

—— Second account of the fishes obtained by Surgeon-Major A. S. G. Jayakar at Muscat, east coast of Arabia. *Ibid.*, 1889, pt. 2, pp. 236–46.

—— Third account of the fishes obtained by Surgeon-Major A. S. G. Jayakar at Muscat, east coast of Arabia. *Ibid.*, 1892, pp. 134–6.

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Brenner, R. Perlen- und Fischhandel des Persischen Golfes. *Petermanns Mitt.*, 1873, pp. 60–2.

Anon. Perlfischerei im Persischen Meerbusen. *Vossische Zeitung*, 1881, no. 37.

(*c*) *Mollusca.*

Of the numerous monographs on the Mollusca of the Persian Gulf, referred to below, the greater number were based on specimens obtained by Mr. F. W. Townsend, who for many years commanded the Indo-European Telegraph Department's cable ship *Patrick Stewart*. The complete list [1] is as follows:

Smith, E. A. New Species from the Persian Gulf. *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.*, May, 1872, pp. 351–5.

Melvill, J. C. Description of 34 species of Marine Mollusca from the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman. *Mem. and Proc. Manch. Lit. and Phil. Soc.*, vol. 41, pt. 3, pp. 1–25.

—— Further Investigations into the Mollusca Fauna of the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman, with descriptions of 40 species. *Ibid.*, vol. 42, pt. 2, pp. 1–40.

—— Notes on the Mollusca of the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman, mostly dredged by Mr. F. W. Townsend, with descriptions of 27 species. *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.* (7), iv. 81–101.

—— Description of Conus (Cylinder) Clytospira sp.n. from the Arabian Sea. *Ibid.* (7), iv. 461–3.

—— A Revision of the Columbellidae of the Persian Gulf and north Arabian Sea, with description of *C. calliope*. *J. of Malacology*, x. 27–31.

—— Descriptions of 68 new Gastropoda from the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and north Arabian Sea, dredged by Mr. F. W. Townsend, 1901–3. *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.* (7), xii. 299–324.

—— Descriptions of 23 species of Gastropoda from the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea, dredged by Mr. F. W. Townsend, 1903. *Proc. Malac. Soc.*, vi. 51–60.

—— On *Berthais*, a proposed new genus of Marine Gastropoda from the Gulf of Oman. *Ibid.*, vi. 61–3.

—— Descriptions of 28 species of Gastropoda from the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea, dredged by Mr. F. W Townsend, 1900–4. *Ibid.*, vi. 158–69.

—— *Conus coromandelicus, Smith*, its probable affinities and systematic position in the Family Conidae. *Ibid.*, vi. 170–3.

—— Descriptions of twelve new species and one variety of Marine Gastropoda from the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea, collected by Mr. F. W. Townsend, 1902–4. *J. of Malac.*, xi. 79–84.

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[1] For this list the writer is indebted to Mr. J. R. le B. Tomlin, M.A., of the British Museum (Natural History Section).

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—— Descriptions of 29 species of Marine Mollusca from the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and north Arabian Sea, mostly collected by Mr. F. W. Townsend. *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.* (8), vi. 1–17.

—— A Revision of the Species of Pyramidellidae occurring in the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and north Arabian Sea, with descriptions of new species. *Proc. Malac. Soc.*, ix. 171–207.

—— Descriptions of 33 new species of Gastropoda from the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and north Arabian Sea. *Ibid.*, x. 240–54.

—— Revision of the Turridae occurring in the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and north Arabian Sea as evidenced mostly through the results of dredgings carried out by Mr. F. W. Townsend, 1893–1914. *Proc. Malac. Soc.*, xii. 140–201.

—— Descriptions of 34 species of Marine Mollusca from the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea, collected by Mr. F. W. Townsend. *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.* (9), i. 137–58.

—— Freshwater shells from Mesopotamia. *Records of the Indian Museum*, xv. 159.

Melvill, J. C., and Standen, R. The Mollusca of the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea as evidenced mainly through the collections of Mr. F. W. Townsend, 1893–1900, with descriptions of new species. *Proc. Zool. Soc.*, 1901, pp. 327–460.

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—— Revision of the Species of Terebra occurring in the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea as evidenced in the collection formed by Mr. F. W. Townsend, 1893–1914. *J. Conch.*, xv. 204–16.

Mention should also be made of an article by J. C. Melvill and R. Standen on the Mollusca of the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea, in *Proc. Zool. Soc.*, 1901, vol. ii; and a further article on the same subject by Melvill, in *Trans. Manch. Lit. and Philos. Soc.*, 1897, vol. xlii.

(*d*) *General References.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

In the following list the abbreviations adopted for the 'World List of Scientific Periodicals' have been followed; where titles are sufficiently obvious they have not been included in this list.

Amer. Q. Rev. For. Aff. = American Quarterly Review of Foreign Affairs.
Ann. Géogr. = Annales de Géographie.
Ann. Hydrogr. Berl. = Annalen der Hydrographie u. maritimen Meteorologie.
Asiat. J. = Asiatic Journal of London.
Asiat. Quart. Rev. = Asiatic Quarterly Review.
Bull. Com. Asie franç. = Bull. du Comité de l'Asie française.
Bull. Soc. Géogr. comm. Paris = Bulletin de la Société de Géographie commerciale de Paris.
Bull. Soc. Géogr. = Bulletin de la Société de Géographie (Paris).
Contemp. Rev. = Contemporary Review.
Edin. Rev. = Edinburgh Review.
Fort. Rev. = Fortnightly Review.
Géographie = Bulletin de la Soc. de Géographie, Paris.
Geogr. J. = Geographical Journal (incl. Proceedings of the R. Geog. Soc.).
Geogr. Mag. = Geographical Magazine.
Hakl. Soc. = Hakluyt Society.
Imp. Asiat. Quart. Rev. = Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review (ent. as Asiatic Quart. Rev.).
J. & P. Asiat. Soc. Bengal = Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
J. Asiat. = Journal Asiatique.
J. Asiat. Soc. Beng. = Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
J. Bomb. Br. R. A. S. = Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J. Cent. Asian Soc. = Journal of the Central Asian Society, London.
J. East Ind. Assoc. = Journal East Indian Association.
J. Instn. Petrol. Tech. Lond. = Journal of the Institution of Petroleum Technologists, London.
J. Manchr. Geogr. Soc. = Journal of the Manchester Geographical Society.
J. R. A. S. = Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London.
J. R. G. S. = Journal of the Royal Geographical Society.
J. Roy. Soc. Arts = Journal of the Royal Society of Arts.
J. R. Unit. Serv. Instn. = Journal of the Royal United Service Institution.
J. Soc. Arts = Journal of the Society of Arts. [Royal *added later.*]
J. United Empire = Journal of the United Empire.
Lond. and Edin. Philos. Mag. and J. Sc. = London and Edinburgh Philosophical Magazine and Journal of Science.
Memoirs Asiat. Soc. Bengal.
Mitt. Geogr. Ges. Hamburg = Mitteilungen der Geographischen Gesellschaft in Hamburg.
Mouvem. géogr. = Mouvement géographique.
Nineteenth Cent. = Nineteenth Century (and After).
Petermanns Mitt. = A. Petermanns Mitteilungen aus J. Perthes' Geographischer Anstalt.
Proc. Bomb. Geogr. Soc. = Proceedings of the Bombay Geographical Society.
Proc. Cent. Asian Soc. = Proceedings of the Central Asian Society.
Proc. R. G. S. = Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society.
Proc. Roy. Soc. = Proceedings of the Royal Society.
Quart. J. Geol. Soc. = Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London.
Rec. Geol. Survey India = Records of the Geological Survey of India.
Rev. Géogr. = Revue de Géographie.
Scot. Geogr. Mag. = Scottish Geographical Magazine.
Trans. Bomb. Geogr. Soc. = Transactions of the Bombay Geographical Society.
Trans. Geol. Soc. = Transactions of the Geological Society (of London).
Z. Ges. Erdk. Berl. = Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin.

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(1) On the former Extent of the Persian Gulf and on the comparatively recent union of the Euphrates and Tigris. *Lond. and Edin. Philos. Mag. and J. Sc.*, 1834, ii.

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